

*Workers of All Countries, Unite!*





*В.И. Ленин*

# Lenin

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*On  
National  
Liberation  
and Social  
Emancipation*



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О национальном и социальном освобождении

На английском языке

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## \*INTRODUCTION

Lenin's teaching on the development of nations and national relations is of great importance for explaining a country's past and present and predicting its future, for the practical development of national and international processes in the modern world and for determining the strategy and tactics of the international workers' and communist movement.

This collection contains (in full or in part) Lenin's speeches, articles and letters as well as passages from his works and other documents written by him on the national question and on combining the proletarian class struggle with the struggle to abolish national oppression, the struggle for socialism and the anti-imperialist liberation struggle of the enslaved peoples.

Lenin embarked upon the study of the national question at the very beginning of his theoretical and socio-political activity. Thus, in December 1895 and June-July 1896 he wrote his *Draft and Explanation of a Programme for the Social-Democratic Party* which included the demand for "freedom of religion and equality of all nationalities" (see *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 97). Already in this document we find the idea of proletarian solidarity expressed in no uncertain terms: "Capitalist domination is international. That is why the workers' struggle in all countries for their emancipation is only successful if the workers fight jointly against international capital" (p. 30).

From the very outset of its revolutionary activity the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was an organisation of consistent internationalists. Lenin stressed: "To dispel any idea of its being national in character, the Party

called itself *Rossiiskaya* and not *Russkaya*\* (p. 43).

It firmly rejected the organisational federalism of the Bund (the Jewish nationalist party) and consistently propagated the idea of merging all the separate Social-Democratic parties and organisations of different nationalities into a single proletarian party. The RSDLP was the first Social-Democratic party in the world to include the demand for national self-determination in its programme adopted at the Second Party Congress in the summer of 1903. This demand played a most important organisational and mobilising role in uniting social revolution with the national liberation movement.

The most important thing in Lenin's formulation of the problem of relations between nations was the class-party approach to an understanding of its essence and possible solution. Lenin proceeded from the need to unite the struggle for national liberation of peoples oppressed by tsarism with the class struggle of the proletariat of all nations against autocracy. He emphasised: "But it is to the interests of this struggle that we must *subordinate* the demand for national self-determination. It is this that makes all the difference between our approach to the national question and the bourgeois-democratic approach" (p. 34). The principle of the class approach to the national question was regarded by Lenin as a cardinal one throughout his activity. He attached the utmost importance to the internationalist task of overcoming the alienation of workers of the various nationalities engendered by tsarism, "the greatest evil" and "the greatest obstacle in the struggle against autocracy". It should be noted that already in this early period Lenin studied questions of eliminating national strife and of liberating oppressed nationalities within a country in close connection with the international tasks of the working-class movement. In the summer of 1908 he began to publish a series of articles on "awakening Asia". They represented an important stage in the formation of Marxist theory and policy on the national-colonial question. Whereas in his articles of the early period Lenin drew up the Marxist programme for solving the national question in the

\* The adjective *Russkaya* (Russian) pertains to nationality, *Rossiiskaya* (Russian) pertains to Russia as a country.—Ed.

Russian Empire and exposed the reactionary foreign policy of tsarism, in the works of this cycle he gave a scientific analysis of the turbulent events in Asia after the Russian Revolution of 1905 and showed their importance for the revolutionary process, stressing that they had opened up a new era in world history. At the same time these articles were political statements by the leader of the organised working class of Russia in support of the rightful struggle of the peoples of the East. Lenin was the first to see that the old feudal revolts were being replaced by movements led by the ascendant social forces of Asia. He showed that in certain historical conditions Asiatic bourgeois democracy was capable of revolutionary creativity and progressive transformations (p. 69). New forces were joining the world revolutionary movement, and the proletariat of Europe was winning new comrades. Lenin advanced the most important thesis on the indissoluble link between the national liberation movements of the peoples of Asia and the class struggle of the European proletariat (p. 57). Although none of the Asiatic revolutions of the beginning of the twentieth century led to the collapse of the feudal system and freedom from imperialist bondage, they demonstrated the emergence of new social forces on the arena of political struggle. Lenin was therefore fully justified in writing that "no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia or wipe out the heroic democracy of the masses in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries" (p. 65).

On the eve of World War One the national question was made more acute in most European countries by the growth of nationalism encouraged by imperialist circles and their ideologists. Nor was tsarist Russia an exception. Great-Russian chauvinism crept into the programme documents of all the bourgeois and landowners' parties. The imminent social revolution in Russia would have been impossible without the national liberation movements of the oppressed peoples. The proletariat of all the nations in the Russian Empire could be united only on a clear international platform. In the summer of 1913 Lenin thought it necessary to state the position of revolutionary Marxists on the national question publicly. He delivered public lectures in Zurich, Geneva, Lausanne and Bern. They were based on his *Theses on the National Question* written in June 1913. In the final

draft he began these theses with the main idea: "1. The article of our programme (on the self-determination of nations) cannot be interpreted to mean anything but *political* self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form a separate state" (p. 71). This extremely precise and unambiguous definition completed his work of determining the main content of the Marxist programme on the national question. "This article in the Social-Democratic programme is *absolutely* essential to the Social-Democrats of Russia" (ibid.)

But recognition by Social-Democracy of the right of all nationalities to self-determination does not mean that Social-Democrats should not make an independent appraisal in each individual case whether it is right for this or that nation to secede and form a separate state. Social-Democrats should take into account the conditions of capitalist development and the oppression of the proletarians of various nations by the united bourgeoisie of all nationalities, as well as the general tasks of democracy, first and foremost, the interests of the proletarian class struggle for socialism.

Another important problem raised in the theses was that of the ratio of the class and the national in the revolutionary struggle, of the international unity of the proletariat in the struggle against autocracy. As a task of prime importance, Lenin advanced "the closest and fullest alliance of the workers of all nations in all working-class organisations without exception" (p. 73), stressing that the national question must be subordinated to the class tasks of the proletariat.

Lenin considered the overthrowing of the monarchy as the first step towards solving the national question in Russia. "The proletariat cannot achieve freedom other than by revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy and its replacement by a democratic republic. The tsarist monarchy *precludes* liberty and equal rights for nationalities, and is, furthermore, the bulwark of barbarity, brutality and reaction in both Europe and Asia. This monarchy can be overthrown only by the united proletariat of all the nations of Russia, which is giving the lead to consistently democratic elements capable of revolutionary struggle from among the working masses of all nations" (ibid.).

The important Marxist thesis on the two tendencies in the development of the national questions under capitalism was formulated by Lenin in the article "Critical Remarks on the National Question" (October-December 1913). The first tendency is characterised by "the awakening of national life and national movements, the struggle against all national oppression, and the creation of national states" (p. 94). The second by the development and growing frequency of international contact in every form, the break-down of national barriers, the creation of the international unity of capital and economic life in general, of politics, science, etc. Both tendencies are a universal law of capitalism. The first prevails at the beginning of capitalist development, whereas the second characterises mature capitalism that is on the way to changing into a socialist society (ibid.). But the world capitalist system effects the economic drawing together of nations not on the basis of equal cooperation, but in the bitter struggle between the states that go to make up this system, by means of the oppression, violation and enslaving of colonial and semi-colonial peoples, by cruel exploitation and plundering of backward countries by the imperialist states. Therefore the second tendency not only does not do away with the first but, quite the reverse, exacerbates it, arousing the struggle of the oppressed peoples against imperialism.

Lenin showed that the national programme of the Marxists took account of both of these tendencies. By proclaiming the equality of all nations and languages, and the right of nations to self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of independent states it took account of the first tendency. And by asserting the great principle of proletarian internationalism and uncompromising struggle against infecting the proletariat with bourgeois nationalism, the Marxist programme takes into account the second tendency in the development of the national question.

In this article Lenin criticises the position of the supporters of the Austrian bourgeois-nationalist programme of "cultural-national autonomy" who regarded national culture under capitalism as some entity outside class and who divided up workers according to their nationality etc.

He stressed that the main and fundamental flaw of this programme was that it sought to introduce the most refined, most absolute and most extreme nationalism (p. 100).

The article contains the important Marxist definition of the concept of "national culture" and the attitude towards it of the proletariat. International culture is not non-national. This fact has never been denied by Marxists. "The *elements* of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in *every* national culture, since in *every* nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But *every* nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of 'elements', but of the *dominant* culture. Therefore, the general 'national culture' is the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie" (p. 91). From every national culture Marxists take only its democratic and socialist elements, in opposition to the bourgeois culture and the bourgeois nationalism of each nation.

The main thing in the national question under capitalism, Lenin teaches us, is to unite the workers of all nations in the struggle against bourgeois-landowner nationalism, to bring them closer together and to achieve unity of action by them in the class struggle.

Lenin's works written on the eve of World War One dealt a crushing blow to opportunism and revisionism and showed the dialectical connection between the national liberation and bourgeois-democratic movements, stressing that national oppression is one of the forms of political oppression. National movements are social in nature and historically progressive initially, but bourgeois-democratic in their objective essence. They are directed towards the solution of national tasks: firstly, of uniting separate nationalities into a centralised state; and, secondly, of abolishing foreign oppression.

With the development of capitalism and its turning into imperialism the content of the national question changes. From a fighter against feudalism the bourgeoisie of the imperialist states turns into the main force of reaction. This is why Lenin demanded of Marxists for a proper understanding of the place and role of the national question, firstly, that

they take account of the concrete conditions of the historical epoch in which the development of a nation and national movements takes place; secondly, that they proceed from the special features of the changes in the basic, economic factors and, thirdly, that they attach paramount importance to the class struggle of the proletariat, subjecting national interests to international ones. He emphasised that "in any really serious and profound political issue sides are taken according to classes, not nations" (p. 103).

World War One exacerbated all the contradictions of imperialism to the utmost and brought many European countries to the verge of a revolutionary upheaval. It also promoted the growth of the economic and political activity of the national bourgeoisie in the colonial countries.

With chauvinism and nationalism rampant, the peoples at one another's throats and appeals "to defend the fatherland" by the governments of the belligerent countries and the Social-Democratic leaders of the Second International, who had betrayed Marxism once and for all, the Bolsheviks led by Lenin were the only revolutionary party that succeeded right from the beginning of the war in exposing its true nature, defending the international unity of the working class and rousing the working masses to struggle under the slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war.

Lenin criticised those left-wing socialists in the West who suggested that the thesis expressed by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* to the effect that "the working men have no country" should be applied unreservedly to the age of imperialism, to the extent of rejecting national wars and the defence of one's country in general. He wrote that the whole spirit of Marxism, its whole system, demanded that each proposition be considered historically, in connection with others, and in connection with the concrete experience of history (p. 236). This means that in deciding the question of the defence of one's country the proletariat must take into account the concrete historical circumstances, in particular which class is issuing the summons "to defend the homeland" and with what aim in mind. When a national libera-

tion movement begins and it is necessary to assert a country's national independence, the summons to defend the homeland is put forward as the people's most vital task. In this case the working class is the first to rise to the defence of its country's freedom and independence. History shows that the working class is a truly patriotic class. Recognition of the defence of the homeland in national liberation wars and, of course, in wars of socialist states against imperialism, Lenin taught, is fully in keeping with the spirit and essence of Marxism. In an imperialist war, however, socialists should oppose the defence of the homeland, "since (1) imperialism is the eve of socialism, (2) imperialist war is a war of thieves over their booty, (3) in both coalitions there is an *advanced* proletariat, (4) in both a socialist revolution is *ripe*. Only for these reasons are we against 'defence of the fatherland', only for these reasons! ! " (Vol. 35, p. 274). Such a formulation of the question, Lenin believed, was in the interests of the whole international proletariat. Concerning the relative importance of the workers of all countries sharing the same basic international tasks, Lenin stressed that the international unity of the workers was *more important* than their national unity. He pointed out that socialism as a social system is characterised by the striving to end wars and establish a lasting peace. "An end to wars, peace among the nations, the cessation of pillaging and violence—such is our ideal..." (p. 135). Unlike bourgeois pacifists, Marxists understand the inevitable link between wars and the class struggle within a country and the consequent impossibility of ending wars without abolishing classes and building socialism.

In a number of works written during the period of World War One Lenin, basing himself on the laws of the emergence, development and decline of capitalism discovered by Marx and Engels, was the first to give a profound scientific analysis of the economic and political essence of imperialism as the *special, highest and final stage of capitalism*, showing the inevitability under imperialism of the aggravation of all the contradictions characteristic of capitalist society. In particular national oppression becomes more acute and there is a stronger striving by the monopolies to annex "foreign" peoples by force, to

violate the national independence of other states and to re-partition the world.

The enslavement of the majority of nations by a handful of "great powers", the growing colonial oppression, and the cruel exploitation of hundreds of millions of people in the colonial and dependent countries inevitably lead to the growth of the national liberation movement, promoting the creation of a united front of struggle against imperialism by the proletariat of the capitalist states and the people of the colonies and dependent countries.

On the basis of his scientific analysis of the contradictions of capitalism in its final stage Lenin arrived at the radical conclusion that *imperialism is the eve of socialist revolution*. The revolutionary transition to socialism had become a vital necessity.

Lenin showed that under imperialism the bourgeoisie manages to maintain capitalist order only by greatly increasing dictatorial, repressive measures against the proletarian-socialist, national liberation and all other democratic movements. Extensive use is also made of opportunism and revisionism in the working-class movement.

Lenin predicted the possibility of the international unification of monopoly capital not only in the form of international monopolies, but also in the *form of agreements* between whole states.

These tendencies can be seen today in the creation of military blocs which are aimed against the world socialist system and the international working-class movement, against the young Asian and African states and against all other states seeking to free themselves from imperialist bondage.

Lenin contributed to the theory of national relations by his persistent struggle for the revolutionary content of the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination in the epoch of imperialism.

In a number of works written in late 1915 and the first half of 1916, "The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", "The Junius Pamphlet" and others, Lenin summed up the international discussion on the national question and criticised the mistaken views of Rosa Luxemburg, Anton Pan-



nekoek, Karl Radek and others, which were tantamount to rejecting the demand for the right of nations to self-determination in the age of imperialism on the grounds that it was "unpractical" and "illusory". He wrote that under imperialism not only the right of nations to self-determination, but all the basic demands of political democracy can be "put into effect" only in a distorted, partial way as a rare exception. But from this it by no means follows that Social-Democracy should reject a determined struggle for all these demands. Such a rejection would only play into the hands of the bourgeoisie and reaction. On the contrary, it follows that these demands must be formulated and put through in a revolutionary and not a reformist manner, drawing the masses into decisive action, extending and intensifying the struggle for every fundamental democratic demand up to a direct proletarian onslaught on the bourgeoisie, i.e., up to the socialist revolution that expiates the bourgeoisie" (p. 152).

In the article "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism" Lenin strongly criticised the so-called "imperialist economism" trend. Many left-wing socialists in the West and in Russia who opposed the right of nations to self-determination had begun to deny the need for a struggle for democracy under imperialism. Since imperialism meant the rejection of democracy, they argued, democracy was "impossible" under imperialism and there was no point in talking about democratic rights and a republic. The left argued in an "arch-revolutionary" way that the struggle for democracy distracted the workers from the struggle for socialism. Lenin firmly opposed these views. He explained in detail that, although politically imperialism does mean a sharp turn away from democracy to reaction, by striving to abolish democratic freedoms and institutions, it invariably gives rise to and strengthens the democratic aspirations of the masses. The proletariat and the mass of workers in general are by no means indifferent to the type of state in which they live. The more democratic the state system, the easier it is for the proletariat to wage a broad, open, organised and united struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie.

The proletariat must stand at the head of the mass of the people who are defending their freedoms and rights.

It must make use of each and every democratic institution and movement in order to prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie.

Lenin gave a profound substantiation of the theory and tactics of revolutionary Marxists concerning the national question in the age of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. He regarded the national question as an integral part of the question of socialist revolution, of direct support by the proletarian revolution for the struggle of the colonial peoples and oppressed nations in general against imperialism. The victory of the working class in any one imperialist power, to say nothing of revolutions in a number of countries, would create particularly favourable conditions for the development and success of national liberation wars and uprisings, for the winning of independence by peoples oppressed by imperialism.

An important place in Lenin's writings is devoted to the international education of the working class in oppressor and oppressed nations. Lenin constantly stressed that it could not be done in the same way in both, because their position is not the same with regard to the national question. Economically they differ in that part of the working class in oppressor countries enjoys a few crumbs of the super-profits received by the bourgeoisie from exploiting the working people of oppressed nations. "To a *certain degree* the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of *their own* bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations" (p. 207). Politically they differ in that the workers of the oppressor nations occupy a privileged position in a number of spheres of public life compared with the workers of the oppressed nations. Finally, the workers of the oppressor nations are encouraged by the bourgeoisie under capitalism to despise the workers of the oppressed nations (*ibid.*).

This is why Lenin believed that the focal point of the internationalist education of the proletariat of oppressor countries must be shifted to defending the rights of colonies and oppressed nations to secede. The question of self-determination of nations today *hinges* on the conduct of socialists of the oppressor nations, he wrote (p. 136). Socialists of the oppressed nations, however, should support and bring about the unity of workers and all working

people of the oppressed nation with the workers of the oppressor nation. Without this it is impossible to pursue the independent policy of the proletariat and its class solidarity with the proletariat of other countries. The socialists of the oppressed nations should in all cases fight against narrowly nationalistic views, egoism, aloofness and isolation.

Of exceptional importance even today is Lenin's thesis that the winning of political independence by this or that oppressed nation under imperialism does not mean that it has also gained economic independence. Peoples oppressed by imperialism, Lenin taught, must strive not only for political, but also for economic independence. However, colonial and semi-colonial, small and weak peoples, cannot expect to receive real economic assistance from the imperialist powers. On the contrary, under the guise of "economic aid" colonialists seek to enslave these peoples even more.

Lenin believed that only socialism could bring the age of the true liberation of oppressed peoples. He advanced the programme proposition that when it came to power the working class of the developed capitalist countries would not only put into effect the right of all colonial and dependent peoples to self-determination up to and including secession, but also do its utmost to draw closer to the backward peoples of Asia and Africa who had embarked on the path of independent development, render them disinterested assistance and help them "pass to the use of machinery, to the lightening of labour, to democracy, to socialism" (p. 218).

The question of the self-determination of nations, the problem of annexation, the attitude to the call "to defend the homeland" and the definition of national liberation wars were synthesised by Lenin in the following generalised statement: "National self-determination is the same as the struggle for complete national liberation, for complete independence against annexation, and socialists *cannot*—without ceasing to be socialists—reject *such* a struggle in whatever form, right down to an uprising or war" (p. 185).

Social revolution is impossible without the uprisings of small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a part of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without the movement of the politi-

cally non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by landowners, church, monarchy and other nations, etc.

"Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 356).

Lenin advanced and substantiated the brilliant proposition on the diversity of the paths for the transition of different nations to the power of the working class and to socialism, which has been clearly borne out by the events in a number of countries after World War Two. "All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable," he wrote, "but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life" (p. 221).

In spite of the fact that it overthrew the monarchy, the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 in Russia did not solve the fundamental questions confronting her peoples.

On the basis of a profound analysis of the domestic political situation in Russia and the international situation, Lenin concluded the need for the Bolshevik Party to embark on the course of socialist revolution. In his brochure "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution" (April 1917) Lenin formulated the attitude of the Bolsheviks on the national question no longer as a theoretical proposition of the Social-Democrats, but as a practical requirement of the day. "As regards the national question," he wrote, "the proletarian party first of all must advocate the proclamation and immediate realisation of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or forcibly kept within the boundaries of, the state, i.e., annexed" (p. 245). Thus, on the eve of the socialist revolution the Bolsheviks had a scientifically based and clearly formulated programme on the national-colonial question. This programme, drawn up by Lenin, prepared the prerequisites for uniting the revolutionary action of the working class with the national liberation movement

of the borderlands of the former Russian Empire. It provided a firm base for an anti-imperialist alliance of the European proletariat with the peoples of the colonial East.

The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia was the major event of the twentieth century and changed the course of human development radically. It was the greatest socio-class upheaval in the history of mankind.

The national question was one of the most complex problems that confronted Soviet power and demanded an urgent solution. Immediately after the victory of the revolution the Communist Party and the Soviet Government led by Lenin set about putting into effect the programme that had already been drawn up on the national question.

On 2 (15) November the Soviet Government published the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia, the first document of the Soviet state which laid down the main principles of the national policy and national construction. The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia guaranteed political equality for the peoples and nationalities inhabiting the Soviet state. The peoples formerly oppressed by tsarism saw at once that the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government were offering them the real possibility of free development. This strengthened their confidence in the new power.

Then, in the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People (January 1918), the main principles of state organisation and the most important rights of citizens of the Soviet Republic were formulated. "The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics" (p. 259).

By the middle of 1920 the RCP(B) and the Soviet Government had already put into effect the main programme principles of national construction. Under the direct guidance of Lenin and with his personal participation a programme of Party, state, economic and cultural construction got underway in the Soviet East. Lenin regarded the abolition of national oppression as merely the first stage of an extremely complex and important programme aimed at establishing friendly relations between all nations within the framework of a multi-national Soviet state. The national

policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet state was becoming a factor of great international significance.

Over a number of years Lenin struggled to unite left-wing elements in socialist parties and create a new, Third International in place of the opportunist Second International.

The formation of the Communist International (March 1919) was of great historical significance. The Communist International became the militant headquarters of the parties' practical activity in East and West, a centre of political and theoretical generalisation of the experience of the working-class struggle and national liberation movements. Its creation gave a powerful new impetus to the working-class movement in Europe and the national revolutions in Asia and North Africa.

Short before the Second Congress of the Communist International Lenin wrote his brilliant work "*Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* in which he generalised the rich revolutionary experience of the Russian Bolsheviks and the international working-class movement, particularly after World War One and worked out some highly important questions of the strategy and tactics of proletarian parties in the new historical situation, the age of the general crisis of capitalism and the struggle of the two systems.

In it Lenin develops the proposition, still correct today, on the relationship between the international and the national in the working-class movement, on the general laws of socialist revolution and the specific features of the revolutionary movement in this or that country. The main principles of communism, he wrote, are the same for the whole of the international working-class movement. But, while making everywhere what are essentially the same preparations for victory over the bourgeoisie, the working-class movement of each country develops *in its own way*. The proletarian struggle in each country has and must have its own *concrete special features* depending on the economy, politics, culture, national composition of the population, religious divisions, historical traditions, etc.

In their policy communist parties should take these special features into account, but their role must not be exaggerated. It is the general laws of socialist revolution and socialist construction that are of decisive importance.

Moreover the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement in all countries demands "an application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat), which will *correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state distinctions" (p. 271).

Some important questions of the national liberation movement in new conditions were elucidated by Lenin in his address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East in November 1919. Lenin stressed that "a revolutionary war waged by the oppressed peoples, if it really succeeds in arousing the millions of working and exploited people, harbours such potentialities, such miracles, that the emancipation of the peoples of the East is now quite practicable" (p. 263).

Lenin presented the communist parties and organisations of the peoples of the East with the task of applying general communist theory and practice to the specific conditions of their countries where the vast majority of the population are peasants and where it is still necessary to destroy the vestiges of mediaeval oppression, the task of translating communist doctrine into a language understood by each people, of arousing the revolutionary activity of the most backward masses and of joining with the proletarians of other countries in a common struggle.

Addressing the communists of the countries of the East Lenin said: "You will have to base yourselves on the bourgeois nationalism which is awakening, and must awaken, among those peoples, and which has its historical justification" (p. 169). This form of nationalism also has a progressive, democratic content, because it is aimed against imperialist oppression and serves the oppressed people's struggle for national independence. At the same time Lenin warned that while supporting the progressive content in bourgeois nationalism, one must not forget about its social essence, its limitations, and that, after getting rid of the imperialists, one must go further and fight for the emancipation of the working people from social oppression.

With exceptional depth and clarity Lenin formulated the position and tasks of communist parties on the national-

colonial question in the theses of his report on this issue to the Second Congress of the Communist International.

All communist party policy, he taught, must be based on the drawing together of the workers and working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle against imperialism to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. The communists of the metropolis are bound to fight for the liberation of colonial and dependent peoples from "their own" imperialist bourgeoisie, to cultivate in the workers of their country a truly fraternal attitude to the working population of the colonies. In the struggle against imperialism and feudal relations the communists of colonial and dependent countries must support revolutionary national liberation movements, conclude temporary agreements and alliances with the bourgeois democrats of these countries on condition that the independence of the working-class and communist movement is defended even in rudimentary form. At the same time Lenin pointed out the contradictory nature of the position of the bourgeoisie in colonial and dependent countries, its tendency to compromise with the forces of imperialism and internal reaction.

Communists must be in the front ranks of the fighters against colonial oppression, rallying all anti-imperialist forces. But in expressing the interests of the working people, communists cannot and must not limit themselves to the solution of national questions. They must struggle for the radical democratic solution of the agrarian question, for the development of their country along the path of social progress. Lenin pointed to the "need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries..." (p. 281). Communists must expose petty-bourgeois illusions concerning the possibility of a transition to socialism without a class struggle and rally the masses under the banner of scientific communism.

Here, too, in the sphere of national liberation, the working class, which already exists or is in the process of formation in the colonies and semi-colonies, will play a decisive role. The alliance between the peasants and the working class is, in Lenin's opinion, an essential condition of com-

plete success in the struggle against imperialism and for true social progress.

Lenin showed that the emergence of the socialist system greatly facilitates both the winning of political independence by the colonial and semi-colonial peoples and their attaining of economic independence, their progressive social development. Lenin emphasised that it is the international duty of the socialist state to render all possible assistance to peoples who are struggling against imperialism and have embarked on the path of independent development. At the same time he called on the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries and the young national states of the East to draw to achieve the closest alliance with the Soviet Republic (p. 278-79). In his theses and speeches at the Second Congress Lenin noted that the main content of the new era opened up by the October Revolution was the transition from capitalism to socialism.

World War One and the October Revolution laid the foundation for the general crisis of capitalism. Lenin described this crisis as the age of the collapse of capitalism on a world-wide scale, the age of the birth of socialist society. He defined the main features of the general crisis of capitalism: the division of the world into two systems, the aggravation of economic contradictions and of the class struggle in the capitalist countries, and the crisis of the colonial system of imperialism.

The main fact from which the communist parties of all countries must proceed is the emergence of the socialist system. All the events of world politics, Lenin said, are determined by the struggle of these two systems. "The Communist parties, in civilised and backward countries alike, can pose and solve political problems correctly only if they make this postulate their starting-point" (p. 285). Lenin arrived at the most important conclusion about "converting the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national dictatorship (i.e., existing in a single country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i.e., a dictatorship of the proletariat involving at least several advanced countries, and capable of exercising a decisive influence upon world politics as a whole)" (p. 280).

Lenin attached great importance to the discussion of the national-colonial question at the Congress. The Great

October Socialist Revolution had given a powerful impetus to the national liberation movement in China, India, Indonesia and other colonial and dependent countries.

Marx and Engels expressed the idea of the possibility of backward countries effecting the transition to socialism without having to pass through the capitalist stage of development, given the victory of the proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. In the new historical age, with the division of the world into two systems, Lenin substantiated this idea and made it concrete.

In the Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions to the Second Congress of the Communist International, basing himself on the experience of the work of the RCP (B) in Turkestan and other national areas of Russia, Lenin advanced and substantiated the most important proposition that countries which have freed themselves from colonial oppression and in which patriarchal and feudal relations prevailed could with the help of the victorious proletariat of the advanced countries make the transition to a truly democratic system and, "through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage" (p. 288).

Lenin stressed that communists must be able to adapt both the principles of Soviet power and the communist party (its composition and special tasks) to the level of the peasant countries in the colonial East.

Later, in November 1921, in a talk with a delegation from the Mongolian People's Republic, Lenin developed his proposition on the possibility of backward countries making the transition to socialism by-passing the capitalist stage of development.

One of the most important conditions for the non-capitalist development of countries liberated from imperialist oppression, Lenin was firmly convinced, is the close cooperation of these countries with the socialist countries.

Lenin's theses and speeches at the Second Congress of the Communist International developed further the Marxist principles of proletarian internationalism. He firmly condemned those who recognised internationalism in words only and replaced it by petty-bourgeois nationalism.

Proletarian internationalism demands "that the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be

subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world-wide scale..." (p. 280). It demands the unity, close alliance and fraternal mutual assistance of the proletariat and communist parties of all lands. "Complete victory over capitalism cannot be won unless the proletariat and, following it, the mass of working people in all countries and nations throughout the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity" (p. 282).

Lenin saw the consistent application of the principles of internationalism as the true criterion of the revolutionary attitude in the modern age. He stressed that "the struggle against opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concepts and policy of internationalism is a primary and cardinal task" (p. 280). The struggle against this evil, against the most deep-rooted petty-bourgeois prejudices of national pride and national narrow-mindedness, Lenin wrote, comes increasingly to the fore as the task of carrying out a socialist revolution and establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat in a number of countries grows more pressing.

Today, now that there is a community of socialist countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America, the CPSU and other Marxist-Leninist parties, proceeding from and developing Lenin's ideas, believe that the best way to strengthen the world socialist system is through consistent application of the principles of socialist internationalism, the correct combining of national and international tasks by the socialist states, and the development of fraternal mutual aid and support.

True internationalism means the solidarity and mutual support of the world socialist system, the international proletariat and the national liberation movement.

Lenin firmly denounced the slanderous allegations of bourgeois ideologists and reformists concerning the "dictatorship of Moscow" in the international communist movement, regarding them as a malicious attempt to deceive the workers. At the same time he always regarded the Bolshevik Party as one of the vanguards of the world communist movement, whose progressive role derives from the fact that it was a model proletarian party of the new type, that it possesses a wealth of experience of struggle of great international significance, and that under its guidance

the working class of Russia carried out the world's first victorious socialist revolution and began to build a new society.

In his report on the tactics of the RCP (B) to the Third Congress of the Communist International on July 5, 1921, discussing the question of the national liberation movement in the colonies, Lenin again emphasised that the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties of the Second- and Two-and-a-Half Internationals still regarded the movement in the colonial countries as "an insignificant national and totally peaceful movement" (p. 297). This was a great mistake, however, because radical changes had taken place in this connection since the beginning of the twentieth century. "Millions and hundreds of millions, in fact the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe are now coming forward as independent, active and revolutionary factors" (ibid.).

Lenin goes on to draw the prophetic conclusion that "in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary part than we expect" (ibid.).

Developing these propositions in his last article "Better Fewer, But Better", Lenin wrote that the countries of the East had been "drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism" (Vol. 33, p. 499).

Lenin advanced one of the boldest ideas redolent of the dialectics of class and national liberation struggle, namely, that of the unity of the world revolutionary process. The uniting of the main revolutionary forces, the socialist system, which is to play a decisive role in the world revolutionary process, the international working class, and the national liberation movement, the unity of action of communist and working-class parties of all lands on the basis of Marxism and the principles of proletarian internationalism—this is the only true path, mapped out by the great Lenin, to victory in the struggle against imperialism and for peace, national independence, social progress, democracy and socialism.



The main content of the modern age is mankind's transition to socialism on a world-wide scale. The abolition of colonial empires has been completed.

The international communist movement has turned into the most influential political force of the modern day. The historically most important process of the uniting of Marxism-Leninism with the emancipation movement of the working people is constantly growing. There are two possible ways of development for the former colonial countries, breaking away from capitalism or proceeding along the capitalist path, following in the wake of capitalism. The first possibility opens up the prospect of ensuring socio-economic progress and independence, settling social conflicts for the good of the people and raising the working people's standard of living. Capitalist development in Afro-Asian countries is not capable of ensuring high growth rates and merely aggravates class contradictions, inflicting new sufferings on the mass of the people and predisposing them to neo-colonial dependence. Marxists-Leninists are firm supporters and propagandists of the socialist trend in the domestic and foreign policy of liberated countries. It is most important to remember that national democracy can act as revolutionary democracy and ensure its country's development along the path of social progress only in the struggle against imperialism, only in alliance with the socialist community supported by the mass of the working people. Otherwise non-proletarian democracy is regenerated, ceases to be democracy and becomes an anti-national force.

The development of socialist-oriented countries encounters great difficulties because of the weakness and small numbers of the working class and the preponderance of the petty bourgeoisie with its characteristic political prejudices and vacillations, the backwardness of the economic base, dependence on the world capitalist economy, and the negative influence of reactionary-nationalistic, religious and patriarchal ideas.

One of the main directions of the progressive changes that have taken place in recent years in many socialist-orientated countries is the gradual undermining of the positions of imperialist monopolies, the local big bourgeoisie and feudal rulers, restriction of the activity of foreign capital; the handing over of the "commanding heights" in

the economy to the people's state and the transition to planned development of the productive forces, the encouragement of the cooperative movement in the countryside; and enhancement of the role of the working people in public life, and the gradual strengthening of the state apparatus with national personnel devoted to the people; the anti-imperialist nature of the foreign policy of these countries and, finally, the all-round cooperation and friendly relations with socialist countries. In the socialist-orientated countries the revolutionary parties that express the interests of the broad mass of the working people are growing stronger. These parties should be seen as political organisations of the transition type which must turn into Marxist parties not spontaneously, but as a result of a hard class struggle, the deepening of the social revolution as power shifts to a political alliance of the working class and toiling peasantry and as the democratic revolution develops into a socialist revolution.

In waging their struggle against Leninism, bourgeois ideologists are particularly vicious in their attacks on the Marxist-Leninist theory of the non-capitalist development of liberated countries, arguing various versions of a "third path", eulogising petty-bourgeois conceptions of the "national type" of socialism, etc.

However, Lenin's theory has been put into practice in the social development of a number of peoples of the Soviet Union, the Mongolian People's Republic, Vietnam and other countries.

At the present time more than twenty liberated countries with an overall population of more than 150 million have adopted the socialist path of development, because this is the path that in present-day conditions best expresses the aspirations of the working people of the Asian and African countries.

Lenin's principles of equality in the political and economic relations and cooperation of developed states with former colonies and dependent countries remain of the utmost importance also.

A new look at Lenin's documents will convince the reader that Lenin's most important propositions on the national question have withstood the test of time and been borne out by history itself.

From DRAFT AND EXPLANATION OF A PROGRAMME  
FOR THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY

A 5. The fight against the domination of the capitalist class is now being waged by the workers of all European countries and also by the workers of America and Australia. Working-class organisation and solidarity is not confined to one country or one nationality: the workers' parties of different countries proclaim aloud the complete identity (solidarity) of interests and aims of the workers of the whole world. They come together at joint congresses, put forward common demands to the capitalist class of all countries, have established an international holiday of the entire organised proletariat striving for emancipation (May Day), thus welding the working class of all nationalities and of all countries into one great workers' army. The unity of the workers of all countries is a necessity arising out of the fact that the capitalist class, which rules over the workers, does not limit its rule to one country. Commercial ties between the different countries are becoming closer and more extensive; capital constantly passes from one country to another. The banks, those huge depositories that gather capital together and distribute it on loan to capitalists, begin as national institutions and then become international, gather capital from all countries, and distribute it among the capitalists of Europe and America. Enormous joint-stock companies are now being organised to set up capitalist enterprises not in one country, but in several at once; international associations of capitalists make their appearance. Capitalist domination is international. That is why the workers' struggle in all countries for their emancipation is only successful if the workers fight jointly against international capital. That is why the Russian worker's comrade in the fight against the capitalist class is the German worker, the Polish worker, and the French worker, just as his enemy is the Russian, the Polish, and the French capitalists. Thus, in the recent period foreign

capitalists have been very eagerly transferring their capital to Russia, where they are building branch factories and founding companies for running new enterprises. They are flinging themselves greedily on this young country in which the government is more favourable and obsequious to capital than anywhere else, in which they find workers who are less organised and less capable of fighting back than in the West, and in which the workers' standard of living, and hence their wages, are much lower, so that the foreign capitalists are able to draw enormous profits, on a scale unparalleled in their own countries. International capital has already stretched out its hand to Russia. The Russian workers are stretching out their hands to the international labour movement.

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In our draft Party programme we have advanced the demand for a republic with a democratic constitution that would guarantee, among other things, "recognition of the right to self-determination for all nations forming part of the state". Many did not find this demand in our programme sufficiently clear, and in issue No 33,<sup>1</sup> in speaking about the Manifesto of the Armenian Social-Democrats, we explained the meaning of this point in the following way. The Social-Democrats will always combat every attempt to influence national self-determination from without by violence or by any injustice. However, our unreserved recognition of the struggle for freedom of self-determination does not in any way commit us to supporting every demand for national self-determination. As the party of the proletariat, the Social-Democratic Party considers it to be its positive and principal task to further the self-determination of the proletariat in each nationality rather than that of peoples or nations. We must always and unreservedly work for the *very closest* unity of the proletariat of all nationalities, and it is only in isolated and exceptional cases that we can advance and actively support demands conducive to the establishment of a new class state or to the substitution of a looser federal unity, etc., for the complete political unity of a state.

This explanation of our programme on the national question has evoked a strong protest from the Polish Socialist Party (P.S.P.).<sup>2</sup> In an article entitled "The Attitude of the Russian Social-Democrats Towards the National Question" (*Przedświt*,<sup>3</sup> March 1903), the P.S.P. expresses indignation at this "amazing" explanation and at the "vagueness" of this „mysterious" self-determination of ours; it accuses us both of doctrinairism and of holding the "anarchist" view that "the worker is concerned with

nothing but the complete abolition of capitalism, since, we learn, language, nationality, culture, and the like are mere bourgeois inventions", and so on. It is worth considering this argument in detail, for it reveals almost all the misconceptions in the national question so common and so widespread among socialists.

What makes our explanation so "amazing"? Why is it considered a departure from the "literal" meaning? Does recognition of the *right* of nations to self-determination really imply *support* of any demand of every nation for self-determination? After all, the fact we recognise the *right* of all citizens to form free associations does not at all commit us, Social-Democrats, to *supporting* the formation of any new association; nor does it prevent us from opposing and campaigning against the formation of a given association as an inexpedient and unwise step. We even recognise the *right* of the Jesuits to carry on agitation freely, but we fight (not by police methods, of course) against an alliance between the Jesuits and the proletarians. Consequently, when the *Przedświt* says: "If this demand for the right to free self-determination is to be taken literally [and that is how we have taken it hitherto], then it would satisfy us"—it is quite obvious that it is precisely the P.S.P. that is departing from the literal meaning of the programme. Its conclusion is certainly illogical from the formal point of view.

We do not, however, wish to confine ourselves to a formal verification of our explanation. We shall go straight to the root of the matter: is Social-Democracy in duty bound to demand national independence always and unreservedly, or only under certain circumstances; if the latter is the case then under what circumstances? To this question the P.S.P. has always replied in favour of unreserved recognition; we are not in the least surprised, therefore, at the fondness it displays towards the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries,<sup>4</sup> who demand a federal state system and speak in favour of "complete and unreserved recognition of the right to national self-determination" (*Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, No. 18, the article entitled "National Enslavement and Revolutionary Socialism"). Unfortunately, this is nothing more than one of those bourgeois-democratic phrases which, for the hundredth and thousandth time, reveal the true

nature of the so-called Party of so-called Socialist-Revolutionaries. By falling for the bait presented by these phrases and yielding to the allurements of this clamour, the P.S.P. in its turn proves how weak in theoretical background and political activities is its link with the class struggle of the proletariat. But it is to the interests of this struggle that we must *subordinate* the demand for national self-determination. It is this that makes all the difference between our approach to the national question and the bourgeois-democratic approach. The bourgeois democrat (and the present-day socialist opportunist who follows in his footsteps) imagines that democracy eliminates the class struggle, and that is why he presents all his political demands in an abstract way, lumped together, "without reservations", from the standpoint of the interests of the "whole people", or even from that of an eternal and absolute moral principle. Always and everywhere the Social-Democrat ruthlessly exposes this bourgeois illusion, whether it finds expression in an abstract idealist philosophy or in an absolute demand for national independence.

If there is still need to prove that a Marxist can recognise the demand for national independence only conditionally, namely, on the condition indicated above, let us quote a writer who *defended* from the Marxist viewpoint the Polish proletarians' demand for an independent Poland. In 1896 Karl Kautsky wrote in an article entitled "Finis Poloniae?"\*: "Once the proletariat tackles the Polish question it cannot but take a stand in favour of Poland's independence, and, consequently, it cannot but welcome each step that can be taken in this direction at the present time, insofar as this step is at all compatible with the class interests of the international militant proletariat."

"This reservation," Kautsky goes on to say, "should be made in any case. *National independence is not so inseparably linked with the class interests of the militant proletariat as to make it necessary to strive for it unconditionally, under any circumstances.*\*\* Marx and Engels took a most determined stand in favour of the unification and

\* "The End of Poland?"—Ed.

\*\* Italics ours.

liberation of Italy, but this did not prevent them from coming out in 1859 against an Italy allied with Napoleon." (*Neue Zeit*,<sup>5</sup> XIV, 2, S. 520.)

As you see, Kautsky categorically rejects the *unconditional* demand for the independence of nations, and categorically demands that the question be placed not merely on a historical basis in general, but specifically on a class basis. And if we examine how Marx and Engels treated the Polish question, we shall see that this was precisely their approach to it from the very outset. *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung*<sup>6</sup> devoted much space to the Polish question, and emphatically demanded, not only the independence of Poland, but also that Germany go to war with Russia for Poland's freedom. At the same time Marx, however, attacked Ruge, who had spoken in favour of Poland's freedom in the Frankfurt Parliament<sup>7</sup> and had tried to settle the Polish question solely by means of bourgeois-democratic phrases about "shameful injustice", without making any attempt to analyse it historically. Marx was not like those pedants and philistines of the revolution who dread nothing more than "polemics" at revolutionary moments in history. Marx poured pitiless scorn on the "humane" citizen Ruge, and showed him, from the example of the oppression of the south of France by the north of France, that it is not every kind of national oppression that invariably inspires a desire for independence which is justified from the viewpoint of democracy and the proletariat. Marx referred to special social circumstances as a result of which "Poland ... became the revolutionary part of Russia, Austria, and Prussia.... Even the Polish nobility, although their foundations were still partly feudal, adhered to the democratic agrarian revolution with unparalleled selflessness. Poland was already a seat of East-European democracy at a time when Germany was still groping her way through the most platitudinous constitutional and high-flown philosophical ideology.... So long as we [Germans]... help to oppress Poland, so long as we keep part of Poland fettered to Germany, we shall remain fettered to Russia and Russian policy, we shall be unable completely to smash patriarchal feudal absolutism at home. The creation of a democratic Poland is the primary prerequisite of the creation of a democratic Germany."<sup>8</sup>

We have quoted these statements in such detail because they graphically show the historical background at a time when the attitude of international Social-Democracy to the Polish problem took shape in a way which held good almost throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. To ignore the changes which have taken place in that background and to continue advocating the old solutions given by Marxism, would mean being true to the letter but not to the spirit of the teaching, would mean repeating the old conclusions by rote, without being able to use Marxist method of research to analyse the new political situation. Those times and today—the age of the last bourgeois revolutionary movements, and the age of desperate reaction, extreme tension of all forces on the eve of the proletarian revolution—differ in the most obvious way. *In those times* Poland as a whole, not only the peasantry, but even the bulk of the nobility, was revolutionary. The traditions of the struggle for national liberation were so strong and deep-rooted that, after their defeat at home, Poland's best sons went wherever they could find a revolutionary class to support; the memory of Dąbrowski and of Wróblewski is inseparably associated with the greatest movement of the proletariat in the nineteenth century, with the last—and let us hope the last unsuccessful—insurrection of the Paris workers. *In those times* complete victory for democracy in Europe was indeed impossible without the restoration of Poland. *In those times* Poland was indeed the bulwark of civilisation against tsarism, and the vanguard of democracy. *Today* the Polish ruling classes, the gentry in Germany, and in Austria, and the industrial and financial magnates in Russia are supporting the ruling classes of the countries that oppress Poland, while the German and the Russian proletariat are fighting for freedom side by side with the Polish proletariat, which has heroically taken over the great traditions of the old revolutionary Poland. *Today* the advanced representatives of Marxism in the neighbouring country, while attentively watching the political evolution of Europe and fully sympathising with the heroic struggle of the Poles, nevertheless frankly admit that “at present St. Petersburg has become a much more important revolutionary centre than Warsaw, and the Russian revolutionary movement is already of greater international

significance than the Polish movement”. This is what Kautsky wrote as early as 1896, in defending the inclusion in the Polish Social-Democrats' programme of the demand for Poland's restoration. And in 1902 Mehring, who has been studying the evolution of the Polish question since 1848, arrived at the following conclusion: “Had the Polish proletariat desired to inscribe on its banner the restoration of a Polish class state, which the ruling classes themselves do not want to hear of, it would be playing a historical farce; this may well happen to the propertied classes (as, for instance, the Polish nobility in 1791), but it should never happen to the working class. If, on the other hand, this reactionary Utopia comes out to win over to proletarian agitation those sections of the intelligentsia and of the petty bourgeoisie which still respond in some measure to national agitation, then that Utopia is doubly untenable as an outgrowth of that unworthy opportunism which sacrifices the long-term interests of the working class to the cheap and paltry successes of the moment.

“Those interests dictate categorically that, in all three states that have partitioned Poland, the Polish workers should fight unreservedly side by side with their class comrades. The times are past when a bourgeois revolution could create a free Poland: today the renaissance of Poland is possible only through a social revolution, in the course of which the modern proletariat will break its chains.”

We fully subscribe to Mehring's conclusion. We shall only remark that this conclusion remains unassailable even if we do not go as far as Mehring in our arguments. Without any doubt the present state of the Polish question differs radically from that which obtained fifty years ago. However, the present situation cannot be regarded as permanent. Class antagonism has now undoubtedly relegated national questions far into the background, but, without the risk of lapsing into doctrinairism, it cannot be categorically asserted that some particular national question cannot appear temporarily in the foreground of the political drama. No doubt, the restoration of Poland prior to the fall of capitalism is highly improbable, but it cannot be asserted that it is absolutely impossible, or that circumstances may

not arise under which the Polish bourgeoisie will take the side of independence, etc. And Russian Social-Democracy does not in the least intend to tie its own hands. In including in its programme recognition of the right of nations to self-determination, it takes into account *all* possible, and even all *conceivable*, combinations. That programme in no way precludes the adoption by the Polish proletariat of the slogan of a free and independent Polish republic, even though the probability of its becoming a reality before socialism is introduced is infinitesimal. The programme merely demands that a genuinely socialist party shall not corrupt proletarian class-consciousness, or slur over the class struggle, or lure working class with bourgeois-democratic phrases, or break the unity of the proletariat's present-day political struggle. This reservation is the crux of the matter, for only with this reservation do we recognise self-determination. It is useless for the P.S.P. to pretend that it differs from the German or Russian Social-Democrats in their rejection of the right to self-determination, the right to strive for a free and independent republic. It is not this, but the fact that it loses sight of the class point of view, obscures it by chauvinism and disrupts the unity of the present-day political struggle, that prevents us from regarding the P.S.P. as a genuine Social-Democratic workers party. This, for instance, is how the P.S.P. usually presents the question: "...We can only weaken tsarism by wresting Poland from it; it is the task of the Russian comrades to overthrow it." Or again: "...After the overthrow of tsarism we would simply decide our fate by seceding from Russia." See to what monstrous conclusions this monstrous logic leads, even from the viewpoint of the programme demand for Poland's restoration. *Because* the restoration of Poland is one of the possible (but, whilst the bourgeoisie rules, by no means absolutely certain) consequences of democratic evolution, *therefore* the Polish proletariat must not fight together with the Russian proletariat to overthrow tsarism, but "only" to weaken it by wresting Poland from it. *Because* Russian tsarism is concluding a closer and closer alliance with the bourgeoisie and the governments of Germany, Austria, etc., *therefore* the Polish proletariat must weaken its alliance with the proletariat of Russia, Germany, etc., together with whom it is now fighting

against *one and the same* yoke. This is nothing more than sacrificing the most vital interests of the proletariat to the bourgeois-democratic conception of national independence. The disintegration of Russia which the P.S.P. desires, *as distinct from* our aim of overthrowing tsarism, is and will remain an empty phrase, as long as economic development continues to bring the different parts of a political whole more and more closely together, and as long as the bourgeoisie of all countries unite more and more closely against their common enemy, the proletariat, and in support of their common ally, the tsar. But *the division of the forces of the proletariat*, which is now suffering under the yoke of this autocracy, is the sad reality, the direct consequence of the error of the P.S.P., the direct outcome of its worship of bourgeois-democratic formulas. To turn a blind eye to this division of the proletariat, the P.S.P. has to stoop to chauvinism and present the views of the Russian Social-Democrats as follows: "We [the Poles] must wait for the social revolution, and until then we must patiently endure national oppression." This is an utter falsehood. The Russian Social-Democrats have never advised anything of the sort; on the contrary, they themselves fight, and call upon the whole Russian proletariat to fight, against all manifestations of national oppression in Russia; they include in *their* programme not only complete equality of status for all languages, nationalities, etc., but also recognition of every nation's right to determine its own destiny. Recognising this right, we *subordinate* to the interests of the proletarian struggle our support of the demand for national independence, and only a chauvinist can interpret our position as an expression of a Russian's mistrust of a non-Russian, for in reality this position necessarily follows from the class-conscious proletarian's distrust of the bourgeoisie. The P.S.P. takes the view that the national question is *exhausted* by the contrast—"we" (Poles) and "they" (Germans, Russians, etc.). The Social-Democrat, however, gives first place to the contrast—"we", the proletarians, and "they", the bourgeoisie. "We", the proletarians, have seen dozens of times how the bourgeoisie *betrays* the interests of freedom, motherland, language, and nation, when it is confronted with the revolutionary proletariat. We witnessed the French bourgeoisie's surrender

to the Prussians at the moment of the greatest humiliation and suppression of the French nation, the Government of National Defence becoming a Government of National Defection, the bourgeoisie of an oppressed nation calling to its aid the troops of the oppressing nation so as to crush its proletarian fellow countrymen, who had dared to assume power. And that is why, undeterred by chauvinist and opportunist heckling, we shall always say to the Polish workers: only the most complete and intimate alliance with the Russian proletariat can meet the requirements of the present political struggle against the autocracy; only such an alliance can guarantee complete political and economic emancipation.

What we have said on the Polish question is wholly applicable to every other national question. The accursed history of autocracy has left us a legacy of tremendous *estrangement* between the working classes of the various nationalities oppressed by that autocracy. This estrangement is a very great evil, a very great obstacle in the struggle against the autocracy, and we must not legitimise this evil or sanctify this outrageous state of affairs by establishing any such "principles" as separate parties or a "federation" of parties. It is, of course, simpler and easier to follow the line of least resistance, and for everyone to make himself comfortable in his own corner following the rule, "it's none of my business", as the Bund now wants to do.<sup>9</sup> The more we realise the need for unity and the more firmly we are convinced that a concerted offensive against the autocracy is impossible without complete unity, the more obvious becomes the necessity for a centralised organisation of the struggle in the conditions of our political system—the less inclined are we to be satisfied with a "simple", but specious and, at bottom, profoundly false solution of the problem. So long as the injuriousness of estrangement is not realised, and so long as there is no desire to put an end radically and at all costs to this estrangement in the camp of the proletarian party, there is no need for the fig-leaf of "federation", and no use in undertaking to solve a problem which one of the "sides" concerned has no real desire to solve. That being the case, it is better to let the lessons of experience and of the actual movement prove that centralism is essential

for success in the struggle waged by the proletarians of all nationalities oppressed by autocracy against that autocracy and against the international bourgeoisie, which is becoming more and more united.

*Iskra* No. 44, July 15, 1903

*Collected Works*, Vol. 6,  
pp. 452-61

In publishing the Report on the Third Congress<sup>11</sup> of the R.S.D.L.P. in Yiddish, the Editorial Board of the Party Central Organ considers it necessary to say a few words in connection with this publication.

The conditions under which the class-conscious proletariat of the whole world lives tend to create the closest bonds and increasing unity in the systematic Social-Democratic struggle of the workers of the various nationalities. The great slogan "Workers of all countries, unite!", which was proclaimed for the first time more than half a century ago, has now become more than the slogan of just the Social-Democratic parties of the different countries. This slogan is being increasingly embodied both in the unification of the tactics of international Social-Democracy and in the building of organisational unity among the proletarians of the various nationalities who are struggling under the yoke of one and the same despotic state for freedom and socialism.

In Russia the workers of all nationalities, especially those of non-Russian nationality, endure an economic and political oppression such as obtains in no other country. The Jewish workers, as a disfranchised nationality, not only suffer general economic and political oppression, but they also suffer under the yoke which deprives them of the elementary civil rights. The heavier this yoke, the greater the need for the closest possible unity among the proletarians of the different nationalities; for without such unity a victorious struggle against the general oppression is impossible. The more the predatory tsarist autocracy strives to sow the seeds of discord, distrust and enmity among the nationalities it oppresses, the more abominable its policy of inciting the ignorant masses to savage pogroms becomes, the more does the duty devolve upon us, the Social-Democrats, to rally the isolated Social-Democratic

parties of the different nationalities into a single Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

The First Congress of our Party, held in the spring of 1898, set itself the aim of establishing such unity. To dispel any idea of its being national in character, the Party called itself "*Rossiiskaya*" and not "*Russkaya*". The organisation of Jewish workers—the Bund—affiliated with the Party as an autonomous section. Unfortunately, from that moment the unity of the Jewish and non-Jewish Social-Democrats within the single party was destroyed. Nationalist ideas began to spread among the leading members of the Bund, ideas which are in sharp contradiction to the entire world view of Social-Democracy. Instead of trying to draw the Jewish and the non-Jewish workers closer together, the Bund embarked upon a policy of weaning the former away from the latter, at its congresses it claimed a separate existence for the Jews as a nation. Instead of carrying on the work begun by the First Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party towards still closer unity between the Bund and the Party, the Bund moved a step away from the Party. First, it withdrew from the united organisation of the R.S.D.L.P. abroad and set up an independent organisation abroad; later, it withdrew from the R.S.D.L.P. as well, when the Second Congress of our Party in 1903<sup>12</sup> refused by a considerable majority to recognise the Bund as sole representative of the Jewish proletariat. The Bund held to its position, claiming not only that it was the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat, but that no territorial limits were set to its activities. Naturally, the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. could not accept such conditions, since in a number of regions, as, for instance, in South Russia, the organised Jewish proletariat constitutes part of the general Party organisation. Ignoring that stand, the Bund withdrew from the Party and thereby broke the unity of the Social-Democratic proletariat, despite the work that had been carried out in common at the Second Congress, and despite the Party Programme and Rules.

At its Second and Third Congresses the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party expressed its firm conviction that the Bund's withdrawal from the Party was a grave and deplorable mistake on its part. The Bund's mistake is a

result of its basically untenable nationalist views, the result of its groundless claim to be the sole, monopolistic representative of the Jewish proletariat, from which the federalist principle of organisation necessarily derives, the result of its long-standing policy of keeping aloof and separate from the Party. We are convinced that this mistake must be rectified and that it will be rectified as the movement continues to grow. We consider ourselves ideologically at one with the Jewish Social-Democratic proletariat. After the Second Congress our Central Committee pursued a non-nationalist policy, it took pains that such committees should be set up (Polesye, North-Western) as would unite all the local workers, Jewish as well as non-Jewish, into a single whole. At the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. a resolution was adopted providing for the publication of literature in Yiddish. In fulfilment of that resolution we are now issuing a complete translation into Yiddish of the Report on the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., which has appeared in Russian. The Report will show the Jewish workers—both those who are now in our Party and those who are temporarily out of it—how our Party is progressing. The Report will show the Jewish workers that our Party is already emerging from the internal crisis from which it has been suffering since the Second Congress. It will show them what the actual aspirations of our Party are and what its attitude is towards the Social-Democratic parties and organisations of the other nationalities, as well as the attitude of the entire Party and its central body to its component parts. Finally, it will show them—and this is most important—the tactical directives that were drawn up by the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. with regard to the policy of the entire class-conscious proletariat in the present revolutionary situation.

Comrades! The hour of political struggle against the tsarist autocracy is drawing near—the struggle of the proletariat for the freedom of all classes and peoples in Russia, for the freedom of the proletarian drive towards socialism. Terrible trials are in store for us. The outcome of the revolution in Russia depends on our class-consciousness and preparedness, on our unity and determination. Let us set to work then with greater boldness and greater unity, let us do all in our power for the proletarians of the dif-

ferent nationalities to march to freedom under the leadership of a really united Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

*Editorial Board of the Central Organ  
of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party*

Written at the end of May 1905

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of the R.S.D.L.P.*  
(issued in Yiddish)

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From A TACTICAL PLATFORM FOR THE UNITY  
CONGRESS OF THE  
R.S.D.L.P.<sup>13</sup>

ATTITUDE TOWARDS  
THE NATIONAL SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

Whereas:

(1) in the course of the revolution\* the proletariat of all the nationalities in Russia is becoming more and more united by the common struggle;

(2) this common struggle is bringing the various national Social-Democratic parties in Russia closer together;

(3) in many towns amalgamated committees of all the national Social-Democratic organisations of the particular locality are being formed, in place of the former federal committees;

(4) most of the national Social-Democratic parties no longer insist on the principle of federation, which was rightly rejected by the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

We are of the opinion, and propose that the Congress should agree:

(1) that the most energetic measures must be taken to achieve the speedy amalgamation of all the national Social-Democratic parties in Russia into a united Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party;

(2) that the basis of this amalgamation must be the complete merging of all the Social-Democratic organisations in each locality;

(3) that the Party must really ensure the satisfaction of all the Party interests and requirements of the Social-Democratic proletariat of each nationality, giving due consideration also to the specific features of its culture and way of life; and that this may be ensured by holding special conferences of Social-Democrats of the particular nationality, giving representation to the national minorities on the local, regional and central bodies of the Party, forming special groups of authors, publishers, agitators, etc.

\* This refers to the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07.—Ed.

*Note.* The representation of a national minority on the Central Committee of the Party could, for example, be arranged in the following manner: the general Party congress may elect to the Central Committee a definite number of members from among candidates nominated by the regional congresses in those parts of Russia where at present separate Social-Democratic organisations exist.

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## THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN STUTTGART<sup>14</sup>

A feature of the International Socialist Congress held in Stuttgart this August was its large and representative composition: the total of 886 delegates came from all the five continents. Besides providing an impressive demonstration of international unity in the proletarian struggle, the Congress played an outstanding part in defining the tactics of the socialist parties. It adopted general resolutions on a number of questions, the decision of which had hitherto been left solely to the discretion of the individual socialist parties. And the fact that more and more problems require uniform, principled decisions in different countries is striking proof that socialism is being welded into a single international force.

The full text of the Stuttgart resolutions will be found elsewhere in this issue.<sup>15</sup> We shall deal briefly with each of them in order to bring out the chief controversial points and the character of the debate at the Congress.

This is not the first time the colonial question has figured at international congresses. Up till now their decisions have always been an unqualified condemnation of bourgeois colonial policy as a policy of plunder and violence. This time, however, the Congress Commission was so composed that opportunist elements, headed by Van Kol of Holland, predominated in it. A sentence was inserted in the draft resolution to the effect that the Congress did not in principle condemn all colonial policy, for under socialism colonial policy could play a civilising role. The minority in the Commission (Ledebour of Germany, the Polish and Russian Social-Democrats, and many others) vigorously protested against any such idea being entertained. The matter was referred to the Congress, where the forces of the two trends were found to be so nearly equal that there was an extremely heated debate.

The opportunists rallied behind Van Kol. Speaking for

the majority of the German delegation Bernstein and David urged acceptance of a "socialist colonial policy" and fulminated against the radicals for their barren, negative attitude, their failure to appreciate the importance of reforms, their lack of a practical colonial programme, etc. Incidentally, they were opposed by Kautsky, who felt compelled to ask the Congress to pronounce *against* the majority of the German delegation. He rightly pointed out that there was no question of rejecting the struggle for reforms; that was explicitly stated in other sections of the resolution, which had evoked no dispute. The point at issue was whether we should make concessions to the modern regime of bourgeois plunder and violence. The Congress was to discuss present-day colonial policy, which was based on the downright enslavement of primitive populations. The bourgeoisie was actually introducing slavery in the colonies and subjecting the native populations to unprecedented outrages and acts of violence, "civilising" them by the spread of liquor and syphilis. And in that situation socialists were expected to utter evasive phrases about the possibility of accepting colonial policy in principle! That would be an outright desertion to the bourgeois point of view. It would be a decisive step towards subordinating the proletariat to bourgeois ideology, to bourgeois imperialism, which is now arrogantly raising its head.

The Congress defeated the Commission's motion by 128 votes to 108 with ten abstentions (Switzerland). It should be noted that at Stuttgart, for the first time, each nation was allotted a definite number of votes, varying from twenty (for the big nations, Russia included) to two (Luxembourg). The combined vote of the small nations, which either do not pursue a colonial policy, or which suffer from it, outweighed the vote of nations where even the proletariat has been somewhat infected with the lust of conquest.

This vote on the colonial question is of very great importance. First, it strikingly showed up socialist opportunism, which succumbs to bourgeois blandishments. Secondly, it revealed a negative feature in the European labour movement, one that can do no little harm to the proletarian cause, and for that reason should receive serious attention.

Marx frequently quoted a very significant saying of Sismondi. The proletarians of the ancient world, this saying runs, lived at the expense of society; modern society lives at the expense of the proletarians.

The non-propertyed, but non-working, class is incapable of overthrowing the exploiters. Only the proletarian class, which maintains the whole of society, can bring about the social revolution. However, as a result of the extensive colonial policy, the European proletarian *partly* finds himself in a position when it is *not* his labour, but the labour of the practically enslaved natives in the colonies, that maintains the whole of society. The British bourgeoisie, for example, derives more profit from the many millions of the population of India and other colonies than from the British workers. In certain countries this provides the material and economic basis for infecting the proletariat with colonial chauvinism. Of course, this may be only a temporary phenomenon, but the evil must nonetheless be clearly realised and its causes understood in order to be able to rally the proletariat of all countries for the struggle against such opportunism. This struggle is bound to be victorious, since the "privileged" nations are a diminishing fraction of the capitalist nations.

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and beginning of September 1907

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## INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL IN WORLD POLITICS

The revolutionary movement in various European and Asian countries has latterly made itself felt so weightily that we see before us the fairly clear outlines of a new and incomparably higher stage in the international proletarian struggle.

There has been a counter-revolution in Persia—a peculiar combination of the dissolution of Russia's First Duma,<sup>16</sup> and of the Russian insurrection at the close of 1905. Shamefully defeated by the Japanese,\* the armies of the Russian tsar are taking their revenge by zealously serving the counter-revolution. The exploits of the Cossacks in mass shootings, punitive expeditions, manhandling and pillage in Russia are followed by their exploits in suppressing the revolution in Persia. That Nicholas Romanov, heading the Black-Hundred landlords and capitalists scared by strikes and civil war should be venting his fury on the Persian revolutionaries, is understandable. It is not the first time that Russia's Christian soldiers are cast in the role of international hangmen. That Britain is pharisaically washing her hands of the affair, and maintaining a demonstratively friendly neutrality towards the Persian reactionaries and supporters of absolutism, is a somewhat different matter. The British Liberal bourgeoisie, angered by the growth of the labour movement at home and frightened by the mounting revolutionary struggle in India, are more and more frequently and frankly and sharply demonstrating what *brutes* the highly "civilised" European "politicians", men who have passed through the high school of constitutionalism, can turn into when it comes to a rise in the mass struggle against capital and the capitalist colonial system, i.e., a system of enslavement, plunder and

\* This refers to the defeat of the Russian army in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05.—Ed.

violence. The position of the Persian revolutionaries is a difficult one; theirs is a country which the masters of India on the one hand, and the counter-revolutionary Russian Government on the other, were on the point of dividing up between themselves. But the dogged struggle in Tabriz and the repeated swing of the fortunes of war to the revolutionaries who, it seemed, had been utterly defeated, are evidence that the Shah's bashi-bazouks, even though aided by Russian Lyakhovs and British diplomats, are encountering the most vigorous resistance from the people. A revolutionary movement that can offer armed resistance to attempts at restoration, that compels the attempters to call foreign aid—such a movement cannot be destroyed. In these circumstances, even the fullest triumph of Persian reaction would merely be the prelude to fresh popular rebellion.

In Turkey, the revolutionary movement in the army, led by the Young Turks, has achieved victory.<sup>17</sup> True, it is only half a victory, or even less, since Turkey's Nicholas II\* has so far managed to get away with a promise to restore the celebrated Turkish constitution. But in a revolution such half-victories, such forced and hasty concessions by the old regime, are the surest guarantee of new and much more decisive, more acute fluctuations of the civil war, involving broader masses of the people. And the school of civil war is never lost upon nations. It is a hard school, and its complete course *necessarily* includes victories for the counter-revolution, the unbridled licence of the infuriated reactionaries, the savage reprisals of the old government against the rebels, etc. But only incurable pedants and doddering mummies can moan over the fact that the nations have entered this very painful school. For it is one that teaches the oppressed classes how to wage civil war and how to carry the revolution to victory. It concentrates in the masses of contemporary slaves the hatred which down-trodden, benighted and ignorant slaves have always carried within them, and which leads to the supreme history-making feats of slaves who have realised the shame of their slavery.

In India lately, the native slaves of the "civilised" British

\* This refers to the Turkish Sultan, Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918).  
—Ed.

capitalists have been a source of worry to their "masters". There is no end to the acts of violence and plunder which goes under the name of the British system of government in India. Nowhere in the world—with the exception, of course, of Russia—will you find such abject mass poverty, such chronic starvation among the people. The most Liberal and Radical personalities of free Britain, men like John Morley—that authority for Russian and non-Russian Cadets,<sup>18</sup> that luminary of "progressive" journalism (in reality, a lackey of capitalism)—become regular Genghis Khans when appointed to govern India, and are capable of sanctioning every means of "pacifying" the population in their charge, even to the extent of *flogging* political protestors! *Justice*,<sup>19</sup> the little weekly of the British Social-Democrats, has been *banned* in India by these Liberal and "Radical" scoundrels like Morley. And when Keir Hardie, the British M.P. and leader of the Independent Labour Party, had the temerity to visit India and speak to the Indians about the most elementary democratic demands, the whole British bourgeois press raised a howl against this "rebel". And now the most influential British newspapers are in a fury about "agitators" who disturb the tranquillity of India, and are welcoming court sentences and administrative measures in the purely Russian, Plehve style to suppress democratic Indian publicists. But in India the street is beginning to stand up for *its* writers and political leaders. The infamous sentence pronounced by the British jackals on the Indian democrat Tilak—he was sentenced to a long term of exile, the question in the British House of Commons the other day revealing that the Indian jurors had declared for acquittal and that the verdict had been passed *by the vote of the British jurors!*—this revenge against a democrat by the lackeys of the money-bag evoked street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay. In India, too, the proletariat has already developed to conscious political mass struggle—and, that being the case, the Russian-style British regime in India is doomed! By their colonial plunder of Asian countries, the Europeans have succeeded in so steeling one of them, Japan, that she has gained great military victories, which have ensured her independent national development. There can be no doubt that the age-old plunder of India by the British, and the contempo-

rary struggle of all these "advanced" Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy, will *steel* millions, tens of millions of proletarians in Asia to wage a struggle against their oppressors which will be just as victorious as that of the Japanese. The class-conscious European worker now has comrades in Asia, and their number will grow by leaps and bounds.

In China, too, the revolutionary movement against the medieval order has made itself felt with particular force in recent months. True, nothing definite can yet be said about the present movement—there is such scanty information about it and such a spate of reports about revolts in various parts of the country. But there can be no doubt about the vigorous growth of the "new spirit" and the "European currents" that are stirring in China, especially since the Russo-Japanese war; and consequently, the old-style Chinese revolts will inevitably develop into a conscious democratic movement. That some of the participants in colonial plunder are this time greatly concerned is borne out by the way the French are acting in Indo-China: they *helped* the "historic authorities" in China to put down the revolutionaries! They feared equally for the safety of their "own" Asian possessions bordering on China.

The French bourgeoisie, however, are concerned not only over their Asian possessions. The barricades at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, near Paris, the shooting down of the strikers who built these barricades (on Thursday, July 30 [17])—these events are renewed evidence of the sharpening of the class struggle in Europe. Clemenceau, the Radical, who governs France on behalf of the capitalists, is working with uncommon zeal to shatter the last lingering remnants of republican-bourgeois illusions among the proletariat. The shooting down of the workers by troops acting on the orders of a "Radical" government has, under Clemenceau, become almost more frequent than before. The French socialists have already dubbed Clemenceau "The Red" for this; and now, when his agents, gendarmes and generals have again shed the blood of the workers, the socialists recall the catch-phrase once uttered by this ultra-progressive bourgeois republican to a workers' delegation: "You and I are on different sides of the barricade." Yes, the French proletariat and the most extreme

bourgeois republicans have finally taken their place on opposite sides of barricade. The French working class shed much blood to win and defend the republic, and now, on the basis of the fully established republican order, the decisive struggle between the propertied class and the working people is rapidly coming to a head. "It was not simply brutality," *L'Humanité*<sup>20</sup> wrote of the July 30 events, "it was part of a battle." The generals and the police were bent on provoking the workers and turning a peaceful unarmed demonstration into a massacre. But the troops that surrounded and attacked the unarmed strikers and demonstrators met with resistance, their action leading to the immediate erection of barricades, and to events which are agitating the whole of France. These barricades, *L'Humanité* says, were built of boards and were ludicrously ineffectual. But that is not important. What is important is that the Third Republic had eliminated the old habit of barricades; whereas now "Clemenceau is reviving that habit"—and he is just as candid about the matter as were "the butchers of June 1848, and Galliffet in 1871", on the subject of civil war.

And the socialist press is not alone in recalling these great historic dates in connection with the events of July 30. The bourgeois press is furiously attacking the workers, accusing them of behaving as if they intended to start a socialist revolution. One paper cites a minor but characteristic incident indicative of the mood of both sides at the scene of action. When the workers were carrying a wounded comrade past General Virvaire, who directed the operations against the strikers, there were shouts from the demonstrators: "*Saluez!*" And the general of the bourgeois republic saluted his wounded enemy.

The sharpening of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is to be observed in all the advanced capitalist countries. The tendency is the same everywhere, though it manifests itself differently in accordance with the difference in historical conditions, political systems and forms of the labour movement. In America and Britain, where complete political liberty exists and where the proletariat has no revolutionary and socialist traditions that could be called living traditions, this sharpening of the struggle is expressed in the mounting movement against the

trusts, in the extraordinary growth of socialism and the increasing attention it is getting from the propertied classes, and in workers' organisations, in some cases purely economic ones, that are beginning to enter upon systematic and independent proletarian political struggle. In Austria and Germany, and partly also in the Scandinavian countries, this sharpening of the class struggle shows itself in election campaigns, in party relationships, in the closer alignment of the bourgeoisie of all sorts and shades against their common enemy, the proletariat, and in the hardening of judicial and police persecution. Slowly but surely, the two opposing camps are building up their strength, consolidating their organisations, drawing apart with increasing sharpness, in every sphere of public life, as if preparing, silently and intently, for the impending revolutionary battles. In the Latin countries, Italy and particularly France, the sharpening of the class struggle is expressed in especially stormy, violent, and occasionally forthright revolutionary outbreaks, when the pent-up hatred of the proletariat for its oppressors bursts out with unexpected force, and the "peaceful" atmosphere of parliamentary struggle gives way to episodes of real civil war.

The international revolutionary movement of the proletariat does not and cannot develop evenly and in identical forms in different countries. The full and all-round utilisation of every opportunity in every field of activity comes only as the result of the class struggle of the workers in the various countries. Every country contributes its own valuable and specific features to the common stream; but in each particular country the movement suffers from its own one-sidedness, its own theoretical and practical shortcomings of the individual socialist parties. On the whole we clearly see a tremendous step forward of international socialism, the rallying of million-strong armies of the proletariat in the course of a series of practical clashes with the enemy, and the approach of a decisive struggle with the bourgeoisie—a struggle for which the working class is far better *prepared* than in the days of the Commune, that last great proletarian insurrection.

And this step forward of the whole of international socialism, along with the sharpening of the revolutionary-democratic struggle in Asia, places the Russian revolution in a special and especially difficult position. The Russian

revolution has a great international ally both in Europe and in Asia, but, at the same time, and *for that very reason*, it has not only a national, not only a Russian, but also an *international* enemy. Reaction against the mounting proletarian struggle is inevitable in all capitalist countries, and it is uniting the bourgeois governments of the whole world against every popular movement, against every revolution both in Asia, and, particularly, in Europe. The opportunists in our Party, like the majority of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, are still dreaming of a bourgeois revolution in Russia that will "not alienate" or scare away the bourgeoisie, that will not engender "excessive" reaction, or lead to the seizure of power by the revolutionary classes. Vain hopes! A philistine utopia! The amount of inflammable material in all the advanced countries of the world is increasing so speedily, and the conflagration is so clearly spreading to Asian countries which only yesterday were in a state of deep slumber, that the intensification of international bourgeois reaction and the aggravation of every single national revolution are absolutely inevitable.

The historical tasks of our revolution are not being performed by the forces of counter-revolution, and cannot be. The Russian bourgeoisie are necessarily gravitating more and more towards the international anti-proletarian and anti-democratic trend. It is not on liberal allies that the Russian proletariat should count. It must follow its own independent path to the complete victory of the revolution, basing itself on the need for a forcible solution of the agrarian question in Russia by the peasant masses themselves, helping them to overthrow the rule of the Black-Hundred landlords and the Black-Hundred autocracy, setting itself the task of establishing a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in Russia, and remembering that its struggle and its victories are inseparable from the international revolutionary movement. Less illusions about the liberalism of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie (counter-revolutionary both in Russia and the world over). More attention to the growth of the international revolutionary proletariat!

Forty years have passed since the proclamation of the Paris Commune. In accordance with tradition, the French workers paid homage to the memory of the men and women of the revolution of March 18, 1871, by meetings and demonstrations. At the end of May they will again place wreaths on the graves of the Communards who were shot, the victims of the terrible "May Week", and over their graves they will once more vow to fight untiringly until their ideas have triumphed and the cause they bequeathed has been fully achieved.

Why does the proletariat, not only in France but throughout the entire world, honour the men and women of the Paris Commune as their predecessors? And what is the heritage of the Commune?

The Commune sprang up spontaneously. No one consciously prepared it in an organised way. The unsuccessful war with Germany, the privations suffered during the siege, the unemployment among the proletariat and the ruin among the lower middle classes; the indignation of the masses against the upper classes and against authorities who had displayed utter incompetence, the vague unrest among the working class, which was discontented with its lot and was striving for a different social system; the reactionary composition of the National Assembly, which roused apprehensions as to the fate of the republic—all this and many other factors combined to drive the population of Paris to revolution on March 18, which unexpectedly placed power in the hands of the National Guard, in the hands of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie which had sided with it.

It was an event unprecedented in history. Up to that time power had, as a rule, been in the hands of landowners and capitalists, i.e., in the hands of their trusted agents who made up the so-called government. After the revolu-

tion of March 18, when M. Thiers' government had fled from Paris with its troops, its police and its officials, the people became masters of the situation and power passed into the hands of the proletariat. But in the modern society, the proletariat, economically enslaved by capital, cannot dominate politically unless it breaks the chains which fetter it to capital. That is why the movement of the Commune was bound to take on a socialist tinge, i.e., to strive to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie, the rule of capital, and to destroy the very foundations of the contemporary social order.

At first this movement was extremely indefinite and confused. It was joined by patriots who hoped that the Commune would renew the war with the Germans and bring it to a successful conclusion. It enjoyed the support of the small shopkeepers who were threatened with ruin unless there was a postponement of payments on debts and rent (the government refused to grant this postponement, but they obtained it from Commune). Finally, it enjoyed, at first, the sympathy of bourgeois republicans who feared that the reactionary National Assembly (the "rustics", the savage landlords) would restore the monarchy. But it was of course the workers (especially the artisans of Paris), among whom active socialist propaganda had been carried on during the last years of the Second Empire<sup>21</sup> and many of whom even belonged to the International,<sup>22</sup> who played the principal part in this movement.

Only the workers remained loyal to the Commune to the end. The bourgeois republicans and the petty bourgeoisie soon broke away from it: the former were frightened off by the revolutionary-socialist, proletarian character of the movement; the latter broke away when they saw that it was doomed to inevitable defeat. Only the French proletarians supported *their* government fearlessly and untiringly, they alone fought and died for it—that is to say, for the cause of the emancipation of the working class, for a better future for all toilers.

Deserted by its former allies and left without support, the Commune was doomed to defeat. The entire bourgeoisie of France, all the landlords, stockbrokers, factory owners, all the robbers, great and small, all the exploiters joined forces against it. This bourgeois coalition, supported



by Bismarck (who released a hundred thousand French prisoners of war to help crush revolutionary Paris), succeeded in rousing the ignorant peasants and the petty bourgeoisie of the provinces against the proletariat of Paris, and forming a ring of steel around half of Paris (the other half was besieged by the German army). In some of the larger cities in France (Marseilles, Lyons, St. Étienne, Dijon, etc.) the workers also attempted to seize power, to proclaim the Commune and come to the help of Paris, but these attempts were short-lived. Paris, which had first raised the banner of proletarian revolt, was left to its own resources and doomed to certain destruction.

Two conditions, at least, are necessary for a victorious social revolution—highly developed productive forces and a proletariat adequately prepared for it. But in 1871 both of these conditions were lacking. French capitalism was still poorly developed, and France was at that time mainly a petty-bourgeois country (artisans, peasants, shopkeepers, etc.). On the other hand, there was no workers' party; the working class had not gone through a long school of struggle and was unprepared, and for the most part did not even clearly visualise its tasks and methods of fulfilling them. There was no serious political organisation of the proletariat, nor were there strong trade unions and cooperative societies....

But the chief thing which the Commune lacked was time—an opportunity to take stock of the situation and to embark upon the fulfilment of its programme. It had scarcely had time to start work, when the government entrenched in Versailles and supported by the entire bourgeoisie began hostilities against Paris. The Commune had to concentrate primarily on self-defence. Right up to the very end, May 21-28, it had no time to think seriously of anything else.

However, in spite of these unfavourable conditions, in spite of its brief existence, the Commune managed to promulgate a few measures which sufficiently characterise its real significance and aims. The Commune did away with the standing army, that blind weapon in the hands of the ruling classes, and armed the whole people. It proclaimed the separation of church and state, abolished the state payments to religious bodies (i.e., state salaries for priests),

made popular education purely secular, and in this way struck a severe blow at the gendarmes in cassocks. In the purely social sphere the Commune accomplished very little, but this little nevertheless clearly reveals its character as a popular, workers' government. Night-work in bakeries was forbidden; the system of fines, which represented legalised robbery of the workers, was abolished. Finally, there was the famous decree that all factories and workshops abandoned or shut down by their owners were to be turned over to associations of workers that were to resume production. And, as if to emphasise its character as a truly democratic, proletarian government, the Commune decreed that the salaries of all administrative and government officials, irrespective of rank, should not exceed the normal wages of a worker, and in no case amount to more than 6,000 francs a year (less than 200 rubles a month).

All these measures showed clearly enough that the Commune was a deadly menace to the old world founded on the enslavement and exploitation of the people. That was why bourgeois society could not feel at ease so long as the Red Flag of the proletariat waved over the *Hôtel de Ville* in Paris. And when the organised forces of the government finally succeeded in gaining the upper hand over the poorly organised forces of the revolution, the Bonapartist generals, who had been beaten by the Germans and who showed courage only in fighting their defeated countrymen, those French *Rennenkampfs* and *Meller-Zakomelskys*, organised such a slaughter as Paris had never known. About 30,000 Parisians were shot down by the bestial soldiery, and about 45,000 were arrested, many of whom were afterwards executed, while thousands were transported or exiled. In all, Paris lost about 100,000 of its best people, including some of the finest workers in all trades.

The bourgeoisie were satisfied. "Now we have finished with socialism for a long time," said their leader, the blood-thirsty dwarf, Thiers, after he and his generals had drowned the proletariat of Paris in blood. But these bourgeois crows croaked in vain. Less than six years after the suppression of the Commune, when many of its champions were still pining in prison or in exile, a new working-class movement arose in France. A new socialist generation, enriched by the

experience of their predecessors and no whit discouraged by their defeat, picked up the flag which had fallen from the hands of the fighters in the cause of the Commune and bore it boldly and confidently forward. Their battle-cry was: "Long live the social revolution! Long live the Commune!" And in another few years, the new workers' party and the agitational work launched by it throughout the country compelled the ruling classes to release Communards who were still kept in prison by the government.

The memory of the fighters of the Commune is honoured not only by the workers of France but by the proletariat of the whole world. For the Commune fought, not for some local or narrow national aim, but for the emancipation of all toiling humanity, of all the downtrodden and oppressed. As a foremost fighter for the social revolution, the Commune has won sympathy wherever there is a proletariat suffering and engaged in struggle. The epic of its life and death, the sight of a workers' government which seized the capital of the world and held it for over two months, the spectacle of the heroic struggle of the proletariat and the torments it underwent after its defeat—all this raised the spirit of millions of workers, aroused their hopes and enlisted their sympathy for the cause of socialism. The thunder of the cannon in Paris awakened the most backward sections of the proletariat from their deep slumber, and everywhere gave impetus to the growth of revolutionary socialist propaganda. That is why the cause of the Commune is not dead. It lives to the present day in every one of us.

The cause of the Commune is the cause of the social revolution, the cause of the complete political and economic emancipation of the toilers. It is the cause of the proletariat of the whole world. And in the sense it is immortal.

*Rabochaya Gazeta* No. 4-5,  
April 15 (28), 1911

*Collected Works*, Vol. 17,  
pp. 139-43

## A NEW CHAPTER OF WORLD HISTORY

Even the bourgeois press throughout Europe, which for reactionary and selfish reasons defended the notorious *status quo* in the Balkans, is now unanimous in acknowledging that a new chapter of world history has begun.

The defeat of Turkey is beyond question. The victories won by the Balkan states united in a quadruple alliance (Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece) are tremendous. The alliance of these four states is a fact. "The Balkans for the Balkan peoples" is something that has *already* been achieved.

What, then, is the significance of the new chapter of world history?

In Eastern Europe (Austria, the Balkans, Russia), the powerful survivals of medievalism, which terribly hamper social development and the growth of the proletariat, have not yet been abolished. These survivals are absolutism (unlimited autocratic power), feudalism (landlordism and feudal privileges) and the suppression of nationalities.

The class-conscious workers of the Balkan countries are the first to put forward the slogan of a consistently democratic solution of the national problem in the Balkans. That slogan calls for a Balkan federal republic. The weakness of the democratic classes in the present-day Balkan states (where the proletariat is small in number and the peasants are downtrodden, disunited and illiterate) has resulted in an economically and politically indispensable alliance becoming an alliance of Balkan monarchies.

The national question in the Balkans has taken a big stride towards its settlement. Of all the states of Eastern Europe, *Russia alone* remains the most backward today.

Although the alliance which has come into being in the Balkans is an alliance of monarchies and not of republics, and although this alliance has come about through war and not through revolution, a great step has nevertheless



been taken towards doing away with the survivals of medievalism throughout Eastern Europe. And you are rejoicing prematurely, nationalist gentlemen! That step is *against* you, for there are *more* survivals of medievalism in Russia *than anywhere else*!

As for Western Europe, the proletariat there is still more vigorously proclaiming the slogan: No intervention! The Balkans for the Balkan peoples!

*Pravda* No. 149, October 21, 1912

*Collected Works*, Vol. 18,  
pp. 368-69

## From THE HISTORICAL DESTINY OF THE DOCTRINE OF KARL MARX

### III

However, the opportunists had scarcely congratulated themselves on "social peace" and on the non-necessity of storms under "democracy" when a new source of great world storms opened up in Asia. The Russian revolution was followed by revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China. It is in this era of storms and their "repercussions" in Europe that we are now living. No matter what the fate of the great Chinese republic, against which various "civilised" hyenas are now whetting their teeth, no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia or wipe out the heroic democracy of the masses in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries.

Certain people who were inattentive to the conditions for preparing and developing the mass struggle were driven to despair and to anarchism by the lengthy delays in the decisive struggle against capitalism in Europe. We can now see how short-sighted and faint-hearted this anarchist despair is.

The fact that Asia, with its population of eight hundred million, has been drawn into the struggle for these same European ideals should inspire us with optimism and not despair.

The Asiatic revolutions have again shown us the spinelessness and baseness of liberalism, the exceptional importance of the independence of the democratic masses, and the pronounced demarcation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of all kinds. After the experience both of Europe and Asia, anyone who speaks of *non-class* politics and *non-class* socialism, ought simply to be put in a cage and exhibited alongside the Australian kangaroo or something like that.

After Asia, Europe has also begun to stir, although not in the Asiatic way. The "peaceful" period of 1872-1904 has passed, never to return. The high cost of living and

the tyranny of the trusts are leading to an unprecedented sharpening of the economic struggle, which has set into movement even the British workers who have been most corrupted by liberalism. We see a political crisis brewing even in the most "diehard", bourgeois-Junker\* country, Germany. The frenzied arming and the policy of imperialism are turning modern Europe into a "social peace" which is more like a gunpowder barrel. Meanwhile the decay of *all* the bourgeois parties and the maturing of the proletariat are making steady progress.

Since the appearance of Marxism, each of the three great periods of world history has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat, in the coming period of history.

*Pravda* No. 50, March 1, 1913

*Collected Works*, Vol. 18,  
pp. 584-85.

\* Junker—Prussian landlord.—*Ed.*

## THE WORKING CLASS AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Russia is a motley country as far as her nationalities are concerned. Government policy, which is the policy of the landowners supported by the bourgeoisie, is steeped in Black-Hundred nationalism.

This policy is spearheaded against the *majority* of the peoples of Russia who constitute the *majority* of her population. And alongside this we have the bourgeois nationalism of other nations (Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, Georgian, etc.), raising its head and trying to *divert* the working class from its great world-wide tasks by a national struggle or a struggle for national culture.

The national question must be clearly considered and solved by all class-conscious workers.

When the bourgeoisie was fighting for freedom together with the people, together with all those who labour, it stood for full freedom and equal rights for the nations. Advanced countries, Switzerland, Belgium, Norway and others, provide us with an example of how free nations under a really democratic system live together in peace or separate peacefully from each other.

Today the bourgeoisie fears the workers and is seeking an alliance with the Purishkeviches, with the reactionaries, and is betraying democracy, advocating oppression or unequal rights among nations and corrupting the workers with *nationalist* slogans.

In our times the proletariat alone upholds the real freedom of nations and the unity of workers of all nations.

For different nations to live together in peace and freedom or to separate and form different states (if that is more convenient for them), a full democracy, upheld by the working class, is essential. No privileges for any nation or any one language! Not even the slightest degree of oppression or the slightest injustice in respect of a national minority—such are the principles of working-class democracy.

The capitalists and landowners want, at all costs, to keep the workers of different nations apart while the powers that be live splendidly together as shareholders in profitable concerns involving millions (such as the Lena Goldfields); Orthodox Christians and Jews, Russians and Germans, Poles and Ukrainians, everyone who possesses *capital*, exploit the workers of all nations in company.

Class-conscious workers stand for *full unity* among the workers of all nations in every educational, trade union, political, etc., workers' organisation. Let the Cadet gentlemen disgrace themselves by denying or belittling the importance of equal rights for Ukrainians. Let the bourgeoisie of all nations find comfort in lying phrases about national culture, national tasks, etc., etc.

The workers will not allow themselves to be disunited by sugary speeches about national culture, or "national-cultural autonomy". The workers of all nations together, concertedly, uphold full freedom and complete equality of rights in organisations common to all—and that is the guarantee of genuine culture.

The workers of the whole world are building up their own internationalist culture, which the champions of freedom and the enemies of oppression have for long been preparing. To the old world, the world of national oppression, national bickering, and national isolation the workers counterpose a new world, a world of the unity of the working people of all nations, a world in which there is no place for any privileges or for the slightest degree of oppression of man by man.

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pp. 91-92

## BACKWARD EUROPE AND ADVANCED ASIA

The comparison sounds like a paradox. Who does not know that Europe is advanced and Asia backward? But the words taken for this title contain a bitter truth.

In civilised and advanced Europe, with its highly developed machine industry, its rich, multiform culture and its constitutions, a point in history has been reached when the commanding bourgeoisie, fearing the growth and increasing strength of the proletariat, comes out in support of everything backward, moribund and medieval. The bourgeoisie is living out its last days, and is joining with all obsolete and obsolescent forces in an attempt to preserve tottering wage-slavery.

Advanced Europe is commanded by a bourgeoisie which supports everything that is backward. The Europe of our day is advanced not *thanks to*, but *in spite of*, the bourgeoisie, for it is only the proletariat that is adding to the million-strong army of fighters for a better future. It alone preserves and spreads implacable enmity towards backwardness, savagery, privilege, slavery and the humiliation of man by man.

In "advanced" Europe, the *sole advanced* class is the proletariat. As for the living\* bourgeoisie, it is prepared to go to any length of savagery, brutality and crime in order to uphold dying capitalist slavery.

And a more striking example of this decay of the *entire* European bourgeoisie can scarcely be cited than the support it is lending to *reaction* in Asia in furtherance of the selfish aims of the financial manipulators and capitalist swindlers.

Everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength. The bourgeoisie there is *as yet* siding with the people against reaction. *Hundreds* of millions of people are awakening to life, light

\* This should probably read "rotting".—Ed.

and freedom. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy! What sympathy for young Asia imbues all honest democrats!

And "advanced" Europe? It is plundering China and helping the foes of democracy, the foes of freedom in China!

Here is a simple but instructive little calculation. A new Chinese loan has been concluded *against* Chinese democracy: "Europe" is *for* Yüan Shih-kai, who is preparing a military dictatorship. Why does it support him? Because it is good business. The loan has been concluded for about 250,000,000 rubles, at the rate of 84 to a 100. That means that the bourgeois of "Europe" will *pay* the Chinese 210,000,000 rubles, but will take from the public 225,000,000 rubles. There you have at one stroke—a clear profit of *fifteen million rubles* in a few weeks! It really is a "clear" profit, isn't it?

What if the Chinese people do not recognise the loan? China, after all, is a republic, and the majority in parliament are *against* the loan.

Oh, then "advanced" Europe will raise a cry about "civilisation", "order", "culture" and "fatherland"! It will set the *guns* in motion and, in alliance with Yüan Shih-kai, that adventurer, traitor and friend of reaction, crush a republic in "backward" Asia.

All the commanders of Europe, all the European bourgeoisie are *in alliance* with all the forces of reaction and medievalism in China.

But all young Asia, that is, the hundreds of millions of Asian working people, has a reliable ally in the proletariat of all civilised countries. No force on earth can prevent its victory, which will liberate both the peoples of Europe and the peoples of Asia.

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pp. 99-100

## THESES ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION<sup>23</sup>

1. The article of our programme (on the self-determination of nations) cannot be interpreted to mean anything but *political* self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form a separate state.

2. This article in the Social-Democratic programme is *absolutely* essential to the Social-Democrats of Russia

a) for the sake of the basic principles of democracy in general;

b) also because there are, within the frontiers of Russia and, *what is more, in her frontier areas*, a number of nations with sharply distinctive economic, social and other conditions; furthermore, these nations (like all the nations of Russia except the Great Russians) are unbelievably oppressed by the tsarist monarchy;

c) lastly, also in view of the fact that throughout Eastern Europe (Austria and the Balkans) and in Asia—i.e., in countries bordering on Russia—the bourgeois-democratic reform of the state, that has everywhere else in the world led, in varying degree, to the creation of independent national states or states with the closest, interrelated national composition, has either not been consummated or has only just begun;

d) at the present moment Russia is a country whose state system is more backward and reactionary than that of *any* of the contiguous countries, beginning—in the West—with Austria where the fundamentals of political liberty and a constitutional regime were consolidated in 1867, and where universal franchise has now been introduced, and ending—in the East—with republican China. In all their propaganda, therefore, the Social-Democrats of Russia must insist on the right of all nationalities to form separate states or to choose freely the state of which they wish to form part.

3. The Social-Democratic Party's recognition of the right of all nationalities to self-determination requires of Social-

Democrats that they should

a) be unconditionally hostile to the use of force in any form whatsoever by the dominant nation (or the nation which constitutes the majority of the population) in respect of a nation that wishes to secede politically;

b) demand the settlement of the question of such secession only on the basis of a universal, direct and equal vote of the population of the given territory by secret ballot;

c) conduct an implacable struggle against both the Black-Hundred-Octobrist<sup>24</sup> and the liberal-bourgeois (Progressist,<sup>25</sup> Cadet, etc.) parties on every occasion when they defend or sanction national oppression in general or the denial of the right of nations to self-determination in particular.

4. The Social-Democratic Party's recognition of the right of all nationalities to self-determination most certainly does not mean that Social-Democrats reject an independent appraisal of the advisability of the state secession of any nation in each separate case. Social-Democracy should, on the contrary, give its independent appraisal, taking into consideration the conditions of capitalist development and the oppression of the proletarians of various nations by the united bourgeoisie of all nationalities, as well as the general tasks of democracy, first of all and most of all the interests of the proletarian class struggle for socialism.

From this point of view the following circumstance must be given special attention. There are two nations in Russia that are more civilised and more isolated by virtue of a number of historical and social conditions and that could most easily and most "naturally" put into effect their right to secession. They are the peoples of Finland and Poland. The experience of the Revolution of 1905 has shown that even in these two nations the ruling classes, the landowners and bourgeoisie, reject the revolutionary struggle for liberty and seek a *rapprochement* with the ruling classes of Russia and with the tsarist monarchy *because of their fear* of the revolutionary proletariat of Finland and Poland.

Social-Democracy, therefore, must give most emphatic warning to the proletariat and other working people of all nationalities against direct deception by the nationalistic slogans of "their own" bourgeoisie, who with their saccharine or fiery speeches about "our native land" try to *divide*

the proletariat and *divert its attention* from their bourgeois intrigues while they enter into an economic and political alliance with the bourgeoisie of other nations and with the tsarist monarchy.

The proletariat cannot pursue its struggle for socialism and defend its everyday economic interests without the closest and fullest alliance of the workers of all nations in all working-class organisations without exception.

The proletariat cannot achieve freedom other than by revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy and its replacement by a democratic republic. The tsarist monarchy *precludes* liberty and equal rights for nationalities, and is, furthermore, the bulwark of barbarity, brutality and reaction in both Europe and Asia. This monarchy can be overthrown only by the united proletariat of all the nations of Russia, which is giving the lead to consistently democratic elements capable of revolutionary struggle from among the working masses of all nations.

It follows, therefore, that workers who place political unity with "their own" bourgeoisie above complete unity with the proletariat of all nations, are acting against their own interests, against the interests of socialism and against the interests of democracy.

5. Social-Democrats, in upholding a consistently democratic state system, demand unconditional equality for all nationalities and struggle against absolutely all privileges for one or several nationalities.

In particular, Social-Democrats reject a "state" language. It is particularly superfluous in Russia because more than seven-tenths of the population of Russia belong to related Slav nationalities who, given a free school and a free state, could easily achieve intercourse by virtue of the demands of the economic turnover without any "state" privileges for any one language.

Social-Democrats demand the abolition of the old administrative divisions of Russia established by the feudal landowners and the civil servants of the autocratic feudal state and their replacement by divisions based on the requirements of present-day economic life and in accordance, as far as possible, with the national composition of the population.

All areas of the state that are distinguished by social peculiarities or by the national composition of the popula-

tion, must enjoy wide self-government and autonomy, with institutions organised on the basis of universal, equal and secret voting.

6. Social-Democrats demand the promulgation of a law, operative throughout the state, protecting the rights of every national minority in no matter what part of the state. This law should declare inoperative any measure by means of which the national majority might attempt to establish privileges for itself or restrict the rights of a national minority (in the sphere of education, in the use of any specific language, in budget affairs, etc.), and forbid the implementation of any such measure by making it a punishable offence.

7. The Social-Democratic attitude to the slogan of "cultural-national" (or simply "national") "autonomy" or to plans for its implementation is a negative one, since this slogan (1) undoubtedly contradicts the internationalism of the class struggle of the proletariat, (2) makes it easier for the proletariat and the masses of working people to be drawn into the sphere of influence of bourgeois nationalism, and (3) is capable of distracting attention from the task of the consistent democratic transformation of the state as a whole, which transformation alone can ensure (to the extent that this can, in general, be ensured under capitalism) peace between nationalities.

In view of the special acuteness of the question of cultural-national autonomy among Social-Democrats, we give some explanation of the situation.

a) It is impermissible, from the standpoint of Social-Democracy, to issue the slogan of *national* culture either directly or indirectly. The slogan is incorrect because already under capitalism, all economic, political and spiritual life is becoming more and more international. Socialism will make it completely international. International culture, which is now already being systematically created by the proletariat of all countries, does not absorb "national culture" (no matter of what national group) as a whole, but accepts from *each* national culture *exclusively* those of its elements that are consistently democratic and socialist.

b) Probably the one example of an approximation, even though it is a timid one, to the slogan of national culture in Social-Democratic programmes is Article 3 of the Brunn

Programme<sup>26</sup> of the Austrian Social-Democrats. This Article 3 reads: "All self-governing regions of one and the same nation form a single-national alliance that has complete autonomy in deciding its national affairs."

This is a compromise slogan since it does not contain a shadow of extra-territorial (personal) national autonomy. But this slogan, too, is erroneous and harmful, for it is no business of the Social-Democrats of Russia to unite into one nation the Germans in Lodz, Riga, St. Petersburg and Saratov. Our business is to struggle for full democracy and the annulment of *all* national privileges and to unite the German workers in Russia with the workers of all other nations in upholding and developing the international culture of socialism.

Still more erroneous is the slogan of extra-territorial (personal) national autonomy with the setting up (according to a plan drawn up by the consistent supporters of this slogan) of national parliaments and national state secretaries (Otto Bauer and Karl Renner). Such institutions contradict the economic conditions of the capitalist countries, they have not been tested in any of the world's democratic states and are the opportunist dream of people who despair of setting up consistent democratic institutions and are seeking salvation from the national squabbles of the bourgeoisie in the artificial isolation of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of each nation on a number of ("cultural") questions.

Circumstances occasionally compel Social-Democrats to submit for a time to some sort of compromise decisions, but from other countries we must borrow not compromise decisions, but consistently Social-Democratic decisions. It would be particularly unwise to adopt the unhappy Austrian compromise decision today, when it has been a complete failure in Austria and has led to the separatism and secession of the Czech Social-Democrats.

c) The history of the "cultural-national autonomy" slogan in Russia shows that it has been adopted by *all* Jewish bourgeois parties and *only* by Jewish bourgeois parties; and that they have been uncritically followed by the Bund, which has inconsistently rejected the national-Jewish parliament (sejm) and national-Jewish state secretaries. Incidentally, even those European Social-Democrats

who accede to or defend the compromise slogan of cultural-national autonomy, admit that the slogan is quite unrealisable for the Jews (Otto Bauer and Karl Kautsky). "The Jews in Galicia and Russia are more of a caste than a nation, and attempts to constitute Jewry as a nation are attempts at preserving a caste" (Karl Kautsky).

d) In civilised countries we observe a fairly full (relatively) approximation to national peace under capitalism *only* in conditions of the *maximum* implementation of democracy throughout the state system and administration (Switzerland). The slogans of consistent democracy (the republic, a militia, civil servants elected by the people, etc.) unite the proletariat and the working people, and, in general, all progressive elements in each nation in the name of the struggle for conditions that preclude even the slightest national privilege—while the slogan of "cultural-national autonomy" preaches the isolation of nations in educational affairs (or "cultural" affairs, in general), an isolation that is quite compatible with the retention of the grounds for all (including national) privileges.

The slogans of consistent democracy *unite* in a single whole the proletariat and the advanced democrats of all nations (elements that demand not isolation but the uniting of democratic elements of the nations in all matters, including educational affairs), while the slogan of cultural-national autonomy *divides* the proletariat of the different nations and links it up with the reactionary and bourgeois elements of the separate nations.

The slogans of consistent democracy are implacably hostile to the reactionaries and to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of all nations, while the slogan of cultural-national autonomy is quite acceptable to the reactionaries and counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of some nations.

8. The sum-total of economic and political conditions in Russia therefore demands that Social-Democracy should *unite* unconditionally workers of all nationalities in *all* proletarian organisations without exception (political, trade union, co-operative, educational, etc., etc.). The Party should not be federative in structure and should not form national Social-Democratic groups but should unite the proletarians of all nations in the given locality, conduct propaganda and agitation in *all* the languages of the local proletariat, promo-

te the common struggle of the workers of all nations against every kind of national privilege and should recognise the autonomy of local and regional Party organisations.

9. More than ten years' experience gained by the R.S.D.L.P. confirms the correctness of the above thesis. The Party was founded in 1898 as a party of all Russia, that is, a party of the proletariat of all the nationalities of Russia. The Party remained "Russian" when the Bund seceded in 1903, after the Party Congress had rejected the demand to consider the Bund the *only* representative of the Jewish proletariat. In 1906 and 1907 events showed convincingly that there were no grounds for this demand, a large number of Jewish proletarians continued to co-operate in the common Social-Democratic work in many local organisations, and the Bund re-entered the Party. The Stockholm Congress (1906) brought into the Party the Polish and Latvian Social-Democrats, who favoured *territorial* autonomy, and the Congress, furthermore, did *not* accept the principle of federation and demanded unity of Social-Democrats of all nationalities in each locality. This principle has been in operation in the Caucasus for many years, it is in operation in Warsaw (Polish workers and Russian soldiers), in Vilna (Polish, Lettish, Jewish and Lithuanian workers) and in Riga, and in the three last-named places it has been implemented *against* the separatist Bund. In December 1908, the R.S.D.L.P., through its conference, adopted a special resolution confirming the demand for the *unity* of workers of all nationalities, *on a principle other than* federation. The splitting activities of the Bund separatists in not fulfilling the Party decision led to the collapse of all that "federation of the worst type"<sup>27</sup> and brought about the *rapprochement* of the Bund and the Czech separatists and vice versa (see Kosovsky in *Nasha Zarya*<sup>28</sup> and the organ of the Czech separatists, *Der čechoslawische Sozialdemokrat* No. 3, 1913, on Kosovsky), and, lastly, at the August (1912) Conference of the liquidators<sup>29</sup> it led to an *undercover* attempt by the Bund separatists and liquidators and some of the Caucasian liquidators to insert "cultural-national autonomy" into the Party programme *without any defence of its substance!*

Revolutionary worker Social-Democrats in Poland, in the Latvian Area and in the Caucasus still stand for territorial autonomy and the *unity* of worker Social-Democrats



of all nations. The Bund-liquidator secession and the alliance of the Bund with *non*-Social-Democrats in Warsaw place the *entire* national question, both in its theoretical aspect and the matter of Party structure, *on the order of the day* for all Social-Democrats.

Compromise decisions have been broken by the very people who introduced them against the will of the Party, and the demand for the unity of worker Social-Democrats of all nationalities is being made more loudly than ever.

10. The crudely militant and Black-Hundred-type nationalism of the tsarist monarchy, and also the revival of *bourgeois* nationalism—Great-Russian (Mr. Struve, *Russkaya Molva*,<sup>30</sup> the Progressists, etc.), the Ukrainian, and Polish (the anti-Semitism of Narodowa "Demokracja"<sup>31</sup>), and Georgian, and Armenian, etc.—all this makes it particularly urgent for Social-Democratic organisations in all parts of Russia to devote greater attention than before to the national question and to work out consistently Marxist decisions on this subject in the spirit of consistent internationalism and unity of proletarians of all nations.

a) The slogan of national culture is incorrect and expresses only the limited bourgeois understanding of the national question. International culture.

β) The perpetuating of national divisions and the promoting of refined nationalism—unification, *rapprochement*, the mingling of nations and the expression of the principles of a *different*, international culture.

γ) The despair of the petty bourgeois (hopeless struggle against national bickering) and the fear of radical-democratic reforms and the socialist movement—only radical-democratic reforms can establish national peace in capitalist states and only socialism is able to terminate national bickering.

δ) National curias in educational affairs.<sup>32</sup>

ε) The Jews.

Written prior to June 26  
(July 9), 1913

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## From RESOLUTIONS OF THE SUMMER, 1913, JOINT CONFERENCE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P. AND PARTY OFFICIALS<sup>33</sup>

### RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The orgy of Black-Hundred nationalism, the growth of nationalist tendencies among the liberal bourgeoisie and the growth of nationalist tendencies among the upper classes of the oppressed nationalities, give prominence at the present time to the national question.

The state of affairs in the Social-Democratic movement (the attempts of the Caucasian Social-Democrats, the Bund and the liquidators to annul the Party Programme, etc.) compels the Party to devote more attention than ever to this question.

This Conference, taking its stand on the Programme of the R.S.D.L.P., and in order to organise correctly Social-Democratic agitation on the national question, advances the following propositions:

1. Insofar as national peace is in any way possible in a capitalist society based on exploitation, profit-making and strife, it is attainable only under a consistently and thoroughly democratic republican system of government which guarantees full equality of all nations and languages, which recognises no compulsory official language, which provides the people with schools where instruction is given in all the native languages, and the constitution of which contains a fundamental law that prohibits any privileges whatsoever to any one nation and any encroachment whatsoever upon the rights of a national minority. This particularly calls for wide regional autonomy and fully democratic local self-government, with the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions determined by the local inhabitants themselves on the basis of their economic and social conditions, national make-up of the population, etc.

2. The division of the educational affairs of a single state according to nationalities is undoubtedly harmful from the standpoint of democracy in general, and of the interests of the proletarian class struggle in particular. It is precisely



this division that is implied in the plan for "cultural-national" autonomy, or for "the creation of institutions that will guarantee freedom for national development" adopted in Russia by all the Jewish bourgeois parties and by the petty-bourgeois, opportunist elements among the different nations.

3. The interests of the working class demand the amalgamation of the workers of all the nationalities in a given state in united proletarian organisations—political, trade-union, co-operative, educational, etc. This amalgamation of the workers of different nationalities in single organisations will alone enable the proletariat to wage a victorious struggle against international capital and reaction, and combat the propaganda and aspirations of the landowners, clergy and bourgeois nationalists of all nations, who usually cover up their anti-proletarian aspirations with the slogan of "national culture". The world working-class movement is creating and daily developing more and more an international proletarian culture.

4. As regards to right of the nations oppressed by the tsarist monarchy to self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form independent states, the Social-Democratic Party must unquestionably champion this right. This is dictated by the fundamental principles of international democracy in general, and specifically by the unprecedented national oppression of the majority of the inhabitants of Russia by the tsarist monarchy, which is a most reactionary and barbarous state compared with its neighbouring states in Europe and Asia. Furthermore, this is dictated by the struggle of the Great-Russian inhabitants themselves for freedom, for it will be impossible for them to create a democratic state if they do not eradicate Black-Hundred, Great-Russian nationalism, which is backed by the traditions of a number of bloody suppressions of national movements and systematically fostered not only by the tsarist monarchy and all the reactionary parties, but also by the Great-Russian bourgeois liberals, who toady to the monarchy, particularly in the period of counter-revolution.

5. The right of nations to self-determination (i.e., the constitutional guarantee of an absolutely free and democratic method of deciding the question of secession) must under no circumstances be confused with the expediency

of a given nation's secession. The Social-Democratic Party must decide the latter question exclusively on its merits in each particular case in conformity with the interests of social development as a whole and with the interests of the proletarian class struggle for socialism.

Social-Democrats must moreover bear in mind that the landowners, the clergy and the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations often cover up with nationalist slogans their efforts to divide the workers and dupe them by doing deals behind their backs with the landowners and bourgeoisie of the ruling nation to the detriment of the masses of the working people of all nations.

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December 6, 1913

Dear Friend,

Your letter of November 15 gave me great pleasure. You must realise how highly one in my position appreciates the opinions of comrades in Russia, especially thoughtful people, who are thinking hard studying the subject. I was therefore particularly pleased to get your early reply. One feels less isolated when one receives letters like this. But poetry enough—let's get down to business.

1. You are *in favour* of an official language in Russia. It is "necessary; it has been and will be of great progressive importance". I disagree emphatically. I wrote about this long ago in *Pravda*,\*<sup>34</sup> and so far have not been refuted. Your argument does not convince me in the least. Quite the reverse. The *Russian* language has undoubtedly been of progressive importance for the numerous small and backward nations. But surely you must realise that it *would have been* of much greater progressive importance had there been no compulsion. Is not an "official language" a stick that *drives people away* from the Russian language? Why will you not understand the *psychology* that is so important in the national question and which, if the slightest coercion is applied, besmirches, soils, nullifies the undoubtedly progressive importance of centralisation, large states and a uniform language? But the economy is still more important *than* psychology: in Russia we *already* have a *capitalist* economy, which makes the *Russian* language essential. But you have no faith in the power of the economy and want to prop it up with the crutches of the rotten police regime. Don't you see that in this way you are *crippling* the economy and hindering its development? Will not the collapse of the wretched police regime multiply tenfold (even a thousandfold) the number of voluntary associations for protect-

\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 354-57.—Ed.

ing and spreading the Russian language? No, I absolutely disagree with you, and accuse you of *königlich-preussischer Sozialismus*\*!

2. You are *opposed* to autonomy. You are in favour *only* of regional self-government. I disagree entirely. Recall Engels's explanation that centralisation does not in the least preclude local "liberties". Why should Poland have autonomy and not the Caucasus, the South, or the Urals? Does not the central parliament determine the *limits* of autonomy? We are certainly in favour of democratic centralism. We are opposed to *federation*. We support the Jacobins as against the Girondists. But to be afraid of autonomy in Russia of all places—that is simply ridiculous! It is reactionary. Give me an example, imagine a case in which autonomy *can* be harmful. You cannot. But in Russia (and in Prussia), this narrow interpretation—only local self-government—plays into the hands of the rotten police regime.

3. "The right to self-determination does not imply only the right to secede. It also implies the right to federal association, the right to autonomy," you write. I disagree entirely. It does *not* imply the right to *federation*. Federation means the association of equals, an association that demands *common* agreement. How can *one* side have a *right* to demand that the other side should *agree* with it? That is absurd. We are opposed to federation in principle, it loosens economic ties, and is unsuitable for a single state. You want to secede? All right, go to the devil, if you can break economic bonds, or rather, if the oppression and friction of "coexistence" *disrupt* and ruin economic bonds. You don't want to secede? In that case, excuse me, but don't decide *for* me; don't think that you have a "*right*" to federation.

"Right to autonomy"? Wrong again. We are *in favour of autonomy for all* parts; we are in favour of the *right* to secession (and not *in favour* of everyone's *seceding*!). Autonomy is *our* plan for organising a democratic state. Secession is not what we plan at all. We do not advocate secession. In general, we are opposed to secession. But we stand for the *right* to secede owing to reactionary, Great-Russian na-

\* Royal Prussian socialism.—Ed.

tionalism which has so besmirched the idea of national co-existence that sometimes *closer* ties will be established *after* free secession!

The right to self-determination is an *exception* to our general premise of centralisation. This exception is absolutely essential in view of reactionary Great-Russian nationalism; and any rejection of this exception is opportunism (as in the case of Rosa Luxemburg); it means foolishly playing into the hands of reactionary Great-Russian nationalism. But exceptions *must not be* too broadly interpreted. In this case there is *not*, and must not be anything more than the *right to secede*.

I am writing about this in *Prosveshcheniye*.<sup>\*35</sup> Please do not fail to write to me in greater detail when I have finished these articles (they will appear in three issues). I will send something more. I was mainly responsible for getting the resolution passed. I delivered a series of lectures on the national question in the summer, and have made some little study of it. That is why I intend to "stick tight", although, of course, *ich lasse mich belehren*\*\* from comrades who have studied the question more deeply and for a longer period.

4. So you are opposed to "altering" the Programme; opposed to a "national programme", are you? Here, too, I disagree. You are afraid of *words*. You must not let words frighten you. *Everybody* changes it (the Programme) any way, *surreptitiously*, in an underhand manner, and for the worse. We, however, define, make more precise, develop and consolidate our position in keeping with the spirit of the Programme, with the *consistently* democratic spirit, with the Marxist (anti-Austrian) spirit. This *had to be done*. Let the opportunist<sup>36</sup> (Bundist, liquidator, Narodnik) scum have their say, let them give *their* equally *precise* and *complete* answers to *all* the problems raised, and solved, in our resolution. Let them try. No, we have not "given way" to the opportunists, we have *beaten* them on *all* points.

A popular pamphlet on the national question is very much needed. Write. Looking forward to reply, I send you

\* See pp. 60-96 of this book.—Ed.

\*\* I am willing to take advice.—Ed.

my very heartiest greetings. Regards to all friends.

Yours, V. I.

Sent from Cracow to Astrakhan

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## CRITICAL REMARKS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION<sup>37</sup>

It is obvious that the national question has now become prominent among the problems of Russian public life. The aggressive nationalism of the reactionaries, the transition of counter-revolutionary bourgeois liberalism to nationalism (particularly Great-Russian, but also Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, etc.), and lastly, the increase of nationalist vacillations among the different "national" (i.e., non-Great-Russian) Social-Democrats, who have gone to the length of violating the Party Programme—all these make it incumbent on us to give more attention to the national question than we have done so far.

This article pursues a special object, namely, to examine, in their general bearing, precisely these programme vacillations of Marxists and would-be Marxists, on the national question. In *Severnaya Pravda* No. 29 (for September 5, 1913, "Liberals and Democrats on the Language Question") I had occasion to speak of the opportunism of the liberals on the national question; this article of mine was attacked by the opportunist Jewish newspaper *Zeit*,<sup>38</sup> in an article by Mr. F. Liebman. From the other side, the programme of the Russian Marxists on the national question has been criticised by the Ukrainian opportunist Mr. Lev Yurkevich (*Dzvin*,<sup>39</sup> 1913, Nos. 7-8). Both these writers touched upon so many questions that to reply to them we are obliged to deal with the most diverse aspects of the subject. I think the most convenient thing would be to start with a reprint of the article from *Severnaya Pravda*.

### I. LIBERALS AND DEMOCRATS ON THE LANGUAGE QUESTION

On several occasions the newspapers have mentioned the report of the Governor of the Caucasus, a report that is

noteworthy, not for its Black-Hundred spirit, but for its timid "liberalism". Among other things, the Governor objects to artificial Russification of non-Russian nationalities. Representatives of non-Russian nationalities in the Caucasus are *themselves* striving to teach their children Russian; an example of this is the Armenian church schools, in which the teaching of Russian is not obligatory.

*Russkoye Slovo*<sup>40</sup> (No. 198), one of the most widely circulating liberal newspapers in Russia, points to this fact and draws the correct conclusion that the hostility towards the Russian language in Russia "stems exclusively from" the "artificial" (it should have said "forced") implanting of that language.

"There is no reason to worry about the fate of the Russian language. It will itself win recognition throughout Russia," says the newspaper. This is perfectly true, because the requirements of economic exchange will always compel the nationalities living in one state (as long as they wish to live together) to study the language of the majority. The more democratic the political system in Russia becomes, the more powerfully, rapidly and extensively capitalism will develop, the more urgently will the requirements of economic exchange impel various nationalities to study the language most convenient for general commercial relations.

The liberal newspaper, however, hastens to slap itself in the face and demonstrate its liberal inconsistency.

"Even those who oppose Russification," it says, "would hardly be likely to deny that in a country as huge as Russia there must be one single official language, and that this language can be only Russian."

Logic turned inside out! Tiny Switzerland has not lost anything, but has gained from having not *one single* official language, but three—German, French and Italian. In Switzerland 70 per cent of the population are Germans (in Russia 43 per cent are Great Russians), 22 per cent French (in Russia 17 per cent are Ukrainians) and 7 per cent Italians (in Russia 6 per cent are Poles and 4.5 per cent Byelorussians). If Italians in Switzerland often speak French in their common parliament they do not do so because they are menaced by some savage police law (there are none such in Switzerland), but because the civilised citizens of a democratic state themselves prefer a language that is

understood by a majority. The French language does not instil hatred in Italians because it is the language of a free civilised nation, a language that is not imposed by disgusting police measures.

Why should "huge" Russia, a much more varied and terribly backward country, *inhibit* her development by the retention of any kind of privilege for any one language? Should not the contrary be true, liberal gentlemen? Should not Russia, if she wants to overtake Europe, put an end to every kind of privilege as quickly as possible, as completely as possible and as vigorously as possible?

If all privileges disappear, if the imposition of any one language ceases, all Slavs will easily and rapidly learn to understand each other and will not be frightened by the "horrible" thought that speeches in different languages will be heard in the common parliament. The requirements of economic exchange will themselves *decide* which language of the given country it is to the *advantage* of the majority to know in the interests of commercial relations. This decision will be all the firmer because it is adopted voluntarily by a population of various nationalities, and its adoption will be the more rapid and extensive the more consistent the democracy and, as a consequence of it, the more rapid the development of capitalism.

The liberals approach the language question in the same way as they approach all political questions—like hypocritical hucksters, holding out one hand (openly) to democracy and the other (behind their backs) to the feudalists and police. We are against privileges, shout the liberals, and under cover they haggle with the feudalists for first one, then another, privilege.

Such is the nature of *all* liberal-bourgeois nationalism—not only Great-Russian (it is the worst of them all because of its violent character and its kinship with the Purishkeviches), but Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, Georgian and every other nationalism. Under the slogan of "national culture" the bourgeoisie of *all* nations, both in Austria and in Russia, are *in fact* pursuing the policy of splitting the workers, emasculating democracy and haggling with the feudalists over the sale of the people's rights and the people's liberty.

The slogan of working-class democracy is not "national culture" but the international culture of democracy and the

world-wide working-class movement. Let the bourgeoisie deceive the people with various "positive" national programmes. The class-conscious worker will answer the bourgeoisie—there is only one solution to the national problem (insofar as it can, in general, be solved in the capitalist world, the world of profit, squabbling and exploitation), and that solution is consistent democracy.

The proof—Switzerland in Western Europe, a country with an old culture and Finland in Eastern Europe, a country with a young culture.

The national programme of working-class democracy is: absolutely no privileges for any one nation or any one language; the solution of the problem of the political self-determination of nations, that is, their separation as states by completely free, democratic methods; the promulgation of a law for the whole state by virtue of which any measure (rural,<sup>41</sup> urban or communal,<sup>42</sup> etc., etc.) introducing any privilege of any kind for one of the nations and militating against the equality of nations or the rights of a national minority, shall be declared illegal and ineffective, and any citizen of the state shall have the right to demand that such a measure be annulled as unconstitutional, and that those who attempt to put it into effect be punished.

Working-class democracy contraposes to the nationalist wrangling of the various bourgeois parties over questions of language, etc., the demand for the unconditional unity and complete amalgamation of workers of *all* nationalities in *all* working-class organisations—trade-union, co-operative, consumers', educational and all others—in contradistinction to any kind of bourgeois nationalism. Only this type of unity and amalgamation can uphold democracy and defend the interests of the workers against capital—which is already international and is becoming more so—and promote the development of mankind towards a new way of life that is alien to all privileges and all exploitation.

## 2. "NATIONAL CULTURE"

As the reader will see, the article in *Severnaya Pravda*, made use of a particular example, i.e., the problem of the official language, to illustrate the inconsistency and oppor-

tunism of the liberal bourgeoisie, which, in the national question, extends a hand to the feudalists and the police. Everybody will understand that, apart from the problem of an official language, the liberal bourgeoisie behaves just as treacherously, hypocritically and stupidly (even from the standpoint of the interests of liberalism) in a number of other related issues.

The conclusion to be drawn from this? It is that *all* liberal-bourgeois nationalism sows the greatest corruption among the workers and does immense harm to the cause of freedom and the proletarian class struggle. This bourgeois (and bourgeois-feudalist) tendency is all the more dangerous for its *being concealed* behind the slogan of "national culture". It is under the guise of national culture—Great-Russian, Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, and so forth—that the Black-Hundreds and the clericals, and also the bourgeoisie of *all* nations, are doing their dirty and reactionary work.

Such are the facts of the national life of today, if viewed from the Marxist angle, i.e., from the standpoint of the class struggle, and if the slogans are compared with the interests and policies of classes, and not with meaningless "general principles", declamations and phrases.

The slogan of national culture is a bourgeois (and often also a Black-Hundred and clerical) fraud. Our slogan is: the international culture of democracy and of the world working-class movement.

Here the Bundist Mr. Lieberman rushes into the fray and annihilates me with the following deadly tirade:

"Anyone in the least familiar with the national question knows that international culture is not non-national culture (culture without a national form); non-national culture, which must not be Russian, Jewish, or Polish, but only pure culture, is nonsense; international ideas can appeal to the working class only when they are adapted to the language spoken by the worker, and to the concrete national conditions under which he lives; the worker should not be indifferent to the condition and development of his national culture, because it is through it, and only through it, that he is able to participate in the 'international culture of democracy and of the world working-class movement'. This is well known, but V. I. turns a deaf ear to it all...."

Ponder over this typically Bundist argument, designed, if you please, to demolish the Marxist thesis that I advanced. With the air of supreme self-confidence of one who is "familiar with the national question", this Bundist passes off ordinary bourgeois views as "well-known" axioms.

It is true, my dear Bundist, that international culture is not non-national. Nobody said that it was. Nobody has proclaimed a "pure" culture, either Polish, Jewish, or Russian, etc., and your jumble of empty words is simply an attempt to distract the reader's attention and to obscure the issue with tinkling words.

The *elements* of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in *every* national culture, since in *every* nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But *every* nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of "elements", but of the *dominant* culture. Therefore, the general "national culture" is the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie. This fundamental and, for a Marxist, elementary truth, was kept in the background by the Bundist, who "drowned" it in his jumble of words, i.e., *instead* of revealing and clarifying the class gulf to the reader, he in fact obscured it. *In fact*, the Bundist acted like a bourgeois, whose every interest requires the spreading of a belief in a non-class national culture.

In advancing the slogan of "the international culture of democracy and of the world working-class movement", we take *from each* national culture *only* its democratic and socialist elements; we take them *only* and *absolutely* in opposition to the bourgeois culture and the bourgeois nationalism of *each* nation. No democrat, and certainly no Marxist, denies that all languages should have equal status, or that it is necessary to polemise with one's "native" bourgeoisie in one's native language and to advocate anti-clerical or anti-bourgeois ideas among one's "native" peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. That goes without saying, but the Bundist uses these indisputable truths to obscure the point in dispute, i.e., the real issue.

The question is whether it is permissible for a Marxist, directly or indirectly, to advance the slogan of national culture, or whether he should *oppose* it by advocating, in all languages, the slogan of workers' *internationalism* while "adapting" himself to all local and national features.

The significance of the "national culture" slogan is not determined by some petty intellectual's promise, or good

intention, to "interpret" it as "meaning the development through it of an international culture". It would be puerile subjectivism to look at it that way. The significance of the slogan of national culture is determined by the objective alignment of all classes in a given country, and in all countries of the world. The national culture of the bourgeoisie is a *fact* (and, I repeat, the bourgeoisie everywhere enters into deals with the landed proprietors and the clergy). Aggressive bourgeois nationalism, which drags the minds of the workers, stultifies and disunites them in order that the bourgeoisie may lead them by the halter—such is the fundamental fact of the times.

Those who seek to serve the proletariat must unite the workers of all nations, and unswervingly fight bourgeois nationalism, *domestic* and foreign. The place of those who advocate the slogan of national culture is among the nationalist petty bourgeois, not among the Marxists.

Take a concrete example. Can a Great-Russian Marxist accept the slogan of national, Great-Russian, culture? No, he cannot. Anyone who does that should stand in the ranks of the nationalists, not of the Marxists. Our task is to fight the dominant, Black-Hundred and bourgeois national culture of the Great Russians, and to develop, exclusively in the internationalist spirit and in the closest alliance with the workers of other countries, the rudiments also existing in the history of our democratic and working-class movement. Fight your own Great-Russian landlords and bourgeoisie, fight their "culture" in the name of internationalism, and, in so fighting, "adapt" yourself to the special features of the Purishkeviches and Struves—that is your task, not preaching or tolerating the slogan of national culture.

The same applies to the most oppressed and persecuted nation—the Jews. Jewish national culture is the slogan of the rabbis and the bourgeoisie, the slogan of our enemies. But there are other elements in Jewish culture and in Jewish history as a whole. Of the ten and a half million Jews in the world, somewhat over a half live in Galicia and Russia, backward and semi-barbarous countries, where the Jews are *forcibly* kept in the status of a caste. The other half lives in the civilised world, and there the Jews do not live as a segregated caste. There the great world-progressive features of Jewish culture stand clearly revealed: its internationalism,

its identification with the advanced movements of the epoch (the percentage of Jews in the democratic and proletarian movements is everywhere higher than the percentage of Jews among the population).

Whoever, directly or indirectly, puts forward the slogan of Jewish "national culture" is (whatever his good intentions may be) an enemy of the proletariat, a supporter of all that is *outmoded* and connected with *caste* among the Jewish people; he is an accomplice of the rabbis and the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, those Jewish Marxists who mingle with the Russian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian and other workers in international Marxist organisations, and make their contribution (both in Russian and in Yiddish) towards creating the international culture of the working-class movement—those Jews, despite the separatism of the Bund, uphold the best traditions of Jewry by fighting the slogan of "national culture".

Bourgeois nationalism and proletarian internationalism—these are the two irreconcilably hostile slogans that correspond to the two great class camps throughout the capitalist world, and express the *two* policies (nay, the two world outlooks) in the national question. In advocating the slogan of national culture and building up on it an entire plan and practical programme of what they call "cultural-national autonomy", the Bundists are *in effect* instruments of bourgeois nationalism among the workers.

### 3. THE NATIONALIST BOGEY OF "ASSIMILATION"

The question of assimilation, i.e., of the shedding of national features, and absorption by another nation, strikingly illustrates the consequences of the nationalist vacillations of the Bundists and their fellow-thinkers.

Mr. Liebman, who faithfully conveys and repeats the stock arguments, or rather, tricks of the Bundists, has qualified as "the *old assimilation story*" the demand for the unity and amalgamation of the workers of all nationalities in a given country in united workers' organisations (see the concluding part of the article in *Severnaya Pravda*).

"Consequently," says Mr. F. Liebman, commenting on the concluding part of the article in *Severnaya Pravda*,



"if asked what nationality he belongs to, the worker must answer: I am a Social-Democrat."

Our Bundist considers this the acme of wit. As a matter of fact, he gives himself away completely by *such* witticisms and outcries about "assimilation", levelled against a consistently democratic and Marxist slogan.

Developing capitalism knows two historical tendencies in the national question. The first is the awakening of national life and national movements, the struggle against all national oppression, and the creation of national states. The second is the development and growing frequency of international intercourse in every form, the break-down of national barriers, the creation of the international unity of capital, of economic life in general, of politics, science, etc.

Both tendencies are a universal law of capitalism. The former predominates in the beginning of its development, the latter characterises a mature capitalism that is moving towards its transformation into socialist society. The Marxists' national programme takes both tendencies into account, and advocates, firstly, the equality of nations and languages and the impermissibility of all *privileges* in this respect (and also the right of nations to self-determination, with which we shall deal separately later); secondly, the principle of internationalism and uncompromising struggle against contamination of the proletariat with bourgeois nationalism even of the most refined kind.

The question arises: what does our Bundist mean when he cries out to heaven against "assimilation"? He *could not* have meant the oppression of nations, or the *privileges* enjoyed by a particular nation, because the word "assimilation" here does not fit at all, because all Marxists, individually, and as an official, united whole, have quite definitely and unambiguously condemned the slightest violence against and oppression and inequality of nations, and finally because this general Marxist idea, which the Bundist has attacked, is expressed in the *Severnaya Pravda* article in the most emphatic manner.

No, evasion is impossible here. In condemning "assimilation" Mr. Liebman had in mind, *not* violence, *not* inequality, and *not* privileges. Is there anything real left in the concept of assimilation, after all violence and all inequality have been eliminated?

Yes, there undoubtedly is. What is left is capitalism's world-historical tendency to break down national barriers, obliterate national distinctions, and to *assimilate* nations—a tendency which manifests itself more and more powerfully with every passing decade, and is one of the greatest driving forces transforming capitalism into socialism.

Whoever does not recognise and champion the equality of nations and languages, and does not fight against all national oppression or inequality, is not a Marxist; he is not even a democrat. That is beyond doubt. But it is also beyond doubt that the pseudo-Marxist who heaps abuse upon a Marxist of another nation for being an "assimilator" is simply a *nationalist philistine*. In this unhandsome category of people are all the Bundists and (as we shall shortly see) Ukrainian nationalist-socialists such as L. Yurkevich, Dontsov and Co.

To show concretely how reactionary the views held by these nationalist philistines are, we shall cite facts of three kinds.

It is the Jewish nationalists in Russia in general, and the Bundists in particular, who vociferate most about Russian orthodox Marxists being "assimilators". And yet, as the afore-mentioned figures show, out of the ten and a half million Jews all over the world, *about half* that number live in the *civilised* world, where conditions favouring "assimilation" are *strongest*, whereas the unhappy, downtrodden, disfranchised Jews in Russia and Galicia, who are crushed under the heel of the Purishkeviches (Russian and Polish), live where conditions for "assimilation" *least* prevail, where there is most segregation, and even a "Pale of Settlement", a *numerus clausus* and other charming features of the Purishkevich regime.

The Jews in the civilised world are not a nation, they have in the main become assimilated, say Karl Kautsky and Otto Bauer. The Jews in Galicia and in Russia are not a nation; unfortunately (through *no* fault of their own but through that of the Purishkeviches), they are still a *caste* here. Such is the incontrovertible judgement of people who are undoubtedly familiar with the history of Jewry and take the above-cited facts into consideration.

What do these facts prove? It is that only Jewish reactionary philistines, who want to turn back the wheel of histo-

ry, and make it proceed, not from the conditions prevailing in Russia and Galicia to those prevailing in Paris and New York, but in the reverse direction—only they can clamour against “assimilation”.

The best Jews, those who are celebrated in world history, and have given the world foremost leaders of democracy and socialism, have never clamoured against assimilation. It is only those who contemplate the “rear aspect” of Jewry with reverential awe that clamour against assimilation.

A rough idea of the scale which the general process of assimilation of nations is assuming under the present conditions of advanced capitalism may be obtained, for example, from the immigration statistics of the United States of America. During the decade between 1891-1900, Europe sent 3,700,000 people there, and during the nine years between 1901 and 1909, 7,200,000. The 1900 census in the United States recorded over 10,000,000 foreigners. New York State, in which, according to the same census, there were over 78,000 Austrians, 136,000 Englishmen, 20,000 Frenchmen, 480,000 Germans, 37,000 Hungarians, 425,000 Irish, 182,000 Italians, 70,000 Poles, 166,000 people from Russia (mostly Jews), 43,000 Swedes, etc., grinds down national distinctions. And what is taking place on a grand, international scale in New York is also to be seen in every big city and industrial township.

No one unobsessed by nationalist prejudices can fail to perceive that this process of assimilation of nations by capitalism means the greatest historical progress, the breakdown of hidebound national conservatism in the various backwoods, especially in backward countries like Russia.

Take Russia and the attitude of Great Russians towards the Ukrainians. Naturally, every democrat, not to mention Marxists, will strongly oppose the incredible humiliation of Ukrainians, and demand complete equality for them. But it would be a downright betrayal of socialism and a silly policy even from the standpoint of the bourgeois “national aims” of the Ukrainians to *weaken* the ties and the alliance between the Ukrainian and Great-Russian proletariat that now exist within the confines of a single state.

Mr. Lev Yurkevich, who calls himself a “Marxist” (poor Marx!), is an example of that silly policy. In 1906, So-

kolovsky (Basok) and Lukashevich (Tuchapsky) asserted, Mr. Yurkevich writes, that the Ukrainian proletariat had become completely Russified and needed no separate organisation. Without quoting a single fact *bearing of the direct issue*, Mr. Yurkevich falls upon both for saying this and cries out hysterically—quite in the spirit of the basest, most stupid and most reactionary nationalism—that this is “national passivity”, “national renunciation”, that these men have “split [!] the Ukrainian Marxists”, and so forth. Today, despite the “growth of Ukrainian national consciousness among the workers”, the *minority* of the workers are “nationally conscious”, while the majority, Mr. Yurkevich assures us, “are still under the influence of Russian culture”. And it is our duty, this nationalist philistine exclaims “not to follow the masses, but to lead them, to explain to them their national aims (*natsionalna sprava*)” (Dzvin, p. 89).

This argument of Mr. Yurkevich’s is wholly bourgeois-nationalistic. But even from the point of view of the bourgeois nationalists, some of whom stand for complete equality and autonomy for the Ukraine, while others stand for an independent Ukrainian state, this argument will not wash. The Ukrainians’ striving for liberation is opposed by the Great-Russian and Polish landlord class and by the bourgeoisie of these two nations. What social force is capable of standing up to these classes? The first decade of the twentieth century provided an actual reply to this question: that force is none other than the working class, which rallies the democratic peasantry behind it. By striving to divide, and thereby weaken, the genuinely democratic force, whose victory would make national oppression impossible, Mr. Yurkevich is betraying, not only the interests of democracy in general, but also the interests of his own country, the Ukraine. Given united action by the Great-Russian and Ukrainian proletarians, a free Ukraine *is possible*; without such unity, it is out of the question.

But Marxists do not confine themselves to the bourgeois-national standpoint. For several decades a well-defined process of accelerated economic development has been going on in the South, i.e., the Ukraine, attracting hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers from Great Russia to the capitalist farms, mines, and cities. The “assimila-

tion"—within these limits—of the Great-Russian and Ukrainian proletariat is an indisputable fact. *And this* fact is undoubtedly progressive. Capitalism is replacing the ignorant, conservative, settled muzhik of the Great-Russian or Ukrainian backwoods with a mobile proletarian whose conditions of life break down specifically national narrow-mindedness, both Great-Russian and Ukrainian. Even if we assume that, in time, there will be a state frontier between Great Russia and the Ukraine, the historically progressive nature of the "assimilation" of the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers will be as undoubted as the progressive nature of the grinding down of nations in America. The freer the Ukraine and Great Russia become, the *more extensive and more rapid* will be the development of capitalism, which will still more powerfully attract the workers, the working masses of all nations from all regions of the state and from all the neighbouring states (should Russia become a neighbouring state in relation to the Ukraine) to the cities, the mines, and the factories.

Mr. Lev Yurkevich acts like a real bourgeois, and a short-sighted, narrow-minded, obtuse bourgeois at that, i.e., like a philistine, when he dismisses the benefits to be gained from the intercourse, amalgamation and assimilation of the *proletariat* of the two nations, for the sake of the momentary success of the Ukrainian national cause (*sprava*). The national cause comes first and the proletarian cause second, the bourgeois nationalists say, with the Yurkeviches, Dontsovs and similar would-be Marxists repeating it after them. The proletarian cause must come first, we say, because it not only protects the lasting and fundamental interests of labour and of humanity, but also those of democracy; and without democracy neither an autonomous nor an independent Ukraine is conceivable.

Another point to be noted in Mr. Yurkevich's argument, which is so extraordinarily rich in nationalist gems, is this: the minority of Ukrainian workers are nationally conscious, he says; "the majority are still under the influence of Russian culture" (*bilshist perebuvaie shche pid vplyvom rosiiskoyi kultury*).

Contraposing Ukrainian culture as a whole to Great-Russian culture as a whole, when speaking of the proletar-

iat, is a gross betrayal of the proletariat's interests for the benefit of bourgeois nationalism.

There are two nations in every modern nation—we say to all nationalist-socialists. There are two national cultures in every national culture. There is the Great-Russian culture of the Purishkeviches, Guchkovs and Struves—but there is also the Great-Russian culture typified in the names of Chemyshevsky and Plekhanov. There are *the same two* cultures in the Ukraine as there are in Germany, in France, in England, among the Jews, and so forth. If the majority of the Ukrainian workers are under the influence of Great-Russian culture, we also know definitely that the ideas of Great-Russian democracy and Social-Democracy operate parallel with the Great-Russian clerical and bourgeois culture. In fighting the latter kind of "culture", the Ukrainian *Marxist* will always bring the former into focus, and say to his workers: "We must snatch at, make use of, and develop to the utmost every opportunity for intercourse with the Great-Russian class-conscious workers, with their literature and with their range of ideas; the fundamental interests of *both* the Ukrainian and the Great-Russian working-class movements demand it."

If a Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be swayed by his *quite legitimate and natural* hatred of the Great-Russian oppressors to such a degree that he transfers even a particle of this hatred, even if it be only estrangement, to the proletarian culture and proletarian cause of the Great-Russian workers, then such a Marxist will get bogged down in bourgeois nationalism. Similarly, the Great-Russian Marxists will be bogged down, not only in bourgeois, but also in Black-Hundred nationalism, if he loses sight, even for a moment, of the demand for complete equality for the Ukrainians, or of their *right* to form an independent state.

The Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers must work together, and, as long as they live in a single state, act in the closest organisational unity and concert, towards a common or international culture of the proletarian movement, displaying absolute tolerance in the question of the language in which propaganda is conducted, and in the purely local or purely national *details* of that propaganda. This is the imperative demand of Marxism. All advocacy of

the segregation of the workers of one nation from those of another, all attacks upon Marxist "assimilation", or attempts, where the proletariat is concerned, to contrapose one national culture as a whole to another allegedly integral national culture, and so forth, is *bourgeois* nationalism, against which it is essential to wage a ruthless struggle.

#### 4. "CULTURAL-NATIONAL AUTONOMY"

The question of the "national culture" slogan is of enormous importance to Marxists, not only because it determines the ideological content of all our propaganda and agitation on the national question, as distinct from bourgeois propaganda, but also because the entire programme of the much-discussed cultural-national autonomy is based on this slogan.

The main and fundamental flaw in this programme is that it aims at introducing the most refined, most absolute and most extreme nationalism. The gist of this programme is that every citizen registers as belonging to a particular nation, and every nation constitutes a legal entity with the right to impose compulsory taxation on its members, with national parliaments (Diets) and national secretaries of state (ministers).

Such an idea, applied to the national question, resembles Proudhon's idea, as applied to capitalism. Not abolishing capitalism and its basis—commodity production—but *purging* that basis of abuses, of excrescences, and so forth; not abolishing exchange and exchange value, but, on the contrary, making it "constitutional", universal, absolute, "*fair*", and free of fluctuations, crises and abuses—such was Proudhon's idea.

Just as Proudhon was petty-bourgeois, and his theory converted exchange and commodity production into an absolute category and exalted them as the acme of perfection, so is the theory and programme of "cultural-national autonomy" petty-bourgeois, for it converts bourgeois nationalism into an absolute category, exalts it as the acme of perfection, and purges it of violence, injustice, etc.

Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it

even of the "most just", "purest", most refined and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line that is built, with every international trust, and every workers' association that is formed (an association that is international in its economic activities as well as in its ideas and aims).

The principle of nationality is historically inevitable in bourgeois society and, taking this society into due account, the Marxist fully recognises the historical legitimacy of national movements. But to prevent this recognition from becoming an apologia of nationalism, it must be strictly limited to what is progressive in such movements, in order that this recognition may not lead to bourgeois ideology obscuring proletarian consciousness.

The awakening of the masses from feudal lethargy, and their struggle against all national oppression, for the sovereignty of the people, of the nation, are progressive. Hence, it is the Marxist's *bounden* duty to stand for the most resolute and consistent democratism on all aspects of the national question. This task is largely a negative one. But this is the limit the proletariat can go to in supporting nationalism, for beyond that begins the "positive" activity of the *bourgeoisie* striving to *fortify* nationalism.

To throw off the feudal yoke, all national oppression, and all privileges enjoyed by any particular nation or language, is the imperative duty of the proletariat as a democratic force, and is certainly in the interests of the proletarian class struggle, which is obscured and retarded by bickering on the national question. But to go *beyond* these strictly limited and definite historical limits in helping bourgeois nationalism means betraying the proletariat and siding with the bourgeoisie. There is a border-line here, which is often very slight and which the Bundists and Ukrainian nationalist-socialists completely lose sight of.

Combat all national oppression? Yes, of course! Fight for any kind of national development, for "national culture" in general?—Of course not. The economic development of capitalist society presents us with examples of immature national movements all over the world, examples of the formation of big nations out of a number of small

ones, or to the detriment of some of the small ones, and also examples of the assimilation of nations. The development of nationality in general is the principle of bourgeois nationalism; hence the exclusiveness of bourgeois nationalism, hence the endless national bickering. The proletariat, however, far from undertaking to uphold the national development of every nation, on the contrary, warns the masses against such illusions, stands for the fullest freedom of capitalist intercourse and welcomes every kind of assimilation of nations, except that which is founded on force or privilege.

Consolidating nationalism within a certain "justly" delimited sphere, "constitutionalising" nationalism, and securing the separation of all nations from one another by means of a special state institution—such is the ideological foundation and content of cultural-national autonomy. This idea is thoroughly bourgeois and thoroughly false. The proletariat cannot support any consecration of nationalism; on the contrary, it supports everything that helps to obliterate national distinctions and remove national barriers; it supports everything that makes the ties between nationalities closer and closer, or tends to merge nations. To act differently means siding with reactionary nationalist philistinism.

When, at their Congress in Brünn (in 1899), the Austrian Social-Democrats discussed the plan for cultural-national autonomy, practically no attention was paid to a theoretical appraisal of that plan. It is, however, noteworthy that the following two arguments were levelled against this programme: (1) it would tend to strengthen clericalism; (2) "its result would be the perpetuation of chauvinism, its introduction into every small community, into every small group" (p. 92 of the official report of the Brünn Congress, in German. A Russian translation was published by the Jewish nationalist party, the J.S.L.P.<sup>43</sup>).

There can be no doubt that "national culture", in the ordinary sense of the term, i.e., schools, etc., is at present under the predominant influence of the clergy and the bourgeois chauvinists in all countries in the world. When the Bundists, in advocating "cultural-national" autonomy, say that the constituting of nations will keep the class struggle within them *clean* of all extraneous considerations,

then that is manifest and ridiculous sophistry. It is primarily in the economic and political sphere that a serious class struggle is waged in any capitalist society. To separate the sphere of education *from this* is, firstly, absurdly utopian, because schools (like "national culture" in general) cannot be separated from economics and politics, secondly, it is the economic and political life of a capitalist country that *necessitates* at every step the smashing of the absurd and outmoded national barriers and prejudices, whereas separation of the school system and the like, would only perpetuate, intensify and strengthen "pure" clericalism and "pure" bourgeois chauvinism.

On the boards of joint-stock companies we find capitalists of different nations sitting together in complete harmony. At the factories workers of different nations work side by side. In any really serious and profound political issue sides are taken according to classes, not nations. Withdrawing school education and the like from state control and placing it under the control of the nations is in effect an attempt to *separate* from economics, which unites the nations, the most highly, so to speak, ideological sphere of social life, the sphere in which "pure" national culture or the national cultivation of clericalism and chauvinism has the freest play.

In practice, the plan for "extra-territorial" or "cultural-national" autonomy could mean only one thing: *the division of educational affairs according to nationality*, i.e., the introduction of national curias in school affairs. Sufficient thought to the *real* significance of the famous Bund plan will enable one to realise how utterly reactionary it is even from the standpoint of democracy, let alone from that of the proletarian class struggle for socialism.

A single instance and a single scheme for the "nationalisation" of the school system will make this point abundantly clear. In the United States of America the division of the States into Northern and Southern holds to this day in all departments of life; the former possess the greatest traditions of freedom and of struggle against the slave-owners; the latter possess the greatest traditions of slave-ownership, survivals of persecution of the Negroes, who are economically oppressed and culturally backward (44

per cent of Negroes are illiterate, and 6 per cent of whites), and so forth. In the Northern States Negro children attend the same schools as white children do. In the South there are separate "national", or racial, whichever you please, schools for Negro children. I think that this is the sole instance of actual "nationalisation" of schools.

In Eastern Europe there exists a country where things like the Beilis case<sup>44</sup> are still possible, and Jews are condemned by the Purishkeviches to a condition worse than that of the Negroes. In that country a scheme for *nationalising Jewish schools* was recently mooted in the Ministry. Happily, this reactionary utopia is no more likely to be realised than the utopia of the Austrian petty bourgeoisie, who have despaired of achieving consistent democracy or of putting an end to national bickering, and have invented for the nations school-education *compartments* to keep them from bickering *over the distribution* of schools ... but have "constituted" themselves for an *eternal* bickering of one "national culture" with another.

In Austria, the idea of cultural-national autonomy has remained largely a flight of literary fancy, which the Austrian Social-Democrats themselves have not taken seriously. In Russia, however, it has been incorporated in the programmes of all the Jewish bourgeois parties, and of several petty-bourgeois, opportunist elements in the different nations—for example, the Bundists, the liquidators in the Caucasus, and the conference of Russian national parties of the Left-Narodnik trend. (This conference, we will mention parenthetically, took place in 1907, its decision being adopted *with abstention* on the part of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries and the P.S.P., the Polish social-patriots. Abstention from voting is a method surprisingly characteristic of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and P.S.P., when they want to show their attitude towards a most important question of principle in the sphere of the national programme!)

In Austria it was Otto Bauer, the principal theoretician of "cultural-national autonomy", who devoted a special chapter of his book to prove that such a programme cannot possibly be proposed for the Jews. In Russia, however, it is precisely among the Jews that all the bourgeois parties—and the Bund which echoes them—have adopted this pro-

gramme.\* What does this go to show? It goes to show that history, through the political practice of another state, has exposed the absurdity of Bauer's invention, in exactly the same way as the Russian Bernsteinians (Struve, Tugan-Baranovsky, Berdyaev and Co.), through their rapid evolution from Marxism to liberalism, have exposed the real ideological content of the German Bernsteinism.

Neither the Austrian nor the Russian Social-Democrats have incorporated "cultural-national" autonomy in their programme. However, the Jewish bourgeois parties in a most backward country, and a number of petty-bourgeois, so-called socialist groups *have adopted it* in order to spread ideas of bourgeois nationalism among the working class in a refined form. This fact speaks for itself.

Since we have had to touch upon the Austrian programme on the national question, we must reassert a truth which is often distorted by the Bundists. At the Brünn Congress a *pure* programme of "cultural-national autonomy" was presented. This was the programme of the South-Slav Social-Democrats, §2 of which reads: "Every nation living in Austria, irrespective of the territory occupied by its members, constitutes an autonomous group which manages all its national (language and cultural) affairs quite independently." This programme was supported, not only

\* That the Bundists often vehemently deny that *all* the Jewish bourgeois parties have accepted "cultural-national autonomy" is understandable. This fact only too glaringly exposes the actual role being played by the Bund. When Mr. Manin, a Bundist, tried, in *Luch*,<sup>45</sup> to repeat his denial, he was fully exposed by N. Skop (see *Prosveshcheniye* No. 3). But when Mr. Lev Yurkevich, in *Dzvin* (1913, Nos. 7-8, p. 92), quotes from *Prosveshcheniye* (No. 3, p. 78) N. Sk.'s statement that "the Bundists together with all the Jewish bourgeois parties and groups have long been advocating cultural-national autonomy" and *distorts* this statement by *dropping* the word "Bundists", and *substituting* the words "national rights" for the words "cultural-national autonomy", one can only raise one's hands in amazement! Mr. Lev Yurkevich is not only a nationalist, not only an astonishing ignoramus in matters concerning the history of the Social-Democrats and their programme, but a *downright falsifier* of quotations for the benefit of the Bund. The affairs of the Bund and the Yurkeviches must be in a bad way indeed!



by Kristan but by the influential Ellenbogen. But it was withdrawn; not a single vote was cast for it. A *territorialist* programme was adopted, i.e., one that did not create any national groups "irrespective of the territory occupied by the members of the nation".

Clause 3 of the adopted programme reads: "The self-governing *regions* of one and the same nation shall jointly form a nationally united association, which shall manage its national affairs on an absolutely autonomous basis" (cf. *Prosveshcheniye*, 1913, No. 4, p. 28<sup>46</sup>). Clearly, this compromise programme is wrong too. An example will illustrate this. The German colonists' community in Saratov Gubernia, plus the German working-class suburb of Riga or Lodz, plus the German housing estate near St. Petersburg, etc., would constitute a "nationally united association" of Germans in Russia. Obviously the Social-Democrats cannot demand such a thing or enforce such an association, although of course they do not in the least deny freedom of every kind of association, including associations of any communities of any nationality in a given state. The segregation, by a law of the state, of Germans, etc., in different localities and of different classes in Russia into a single German-national association may be practised by anybody—priests, bourgeois or philistines, but not by Social-Democrats.

### 5. THE EQUALITY OF NATIONS AND THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

When they discuss the national question, opportunists in Russia are given to citing the example of Austria. In my article in *Severnaya Pravda* (No. 10, *Prosveshcheniye*, pp. 96-98), which the opportunists have attacked (Mr. Semkovsky in *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta*,<sup>47</sup> and Mr. Lieberman in *Zeit*), I asserted that, insofar as that is at all possible under capitalism, there was only one solution of the national question, viz., through consistent democracy. In proof of this, I referred, among other things, to Switzerland.

This has not been to the liking of the two opportunists mentioned above, who are trying to refute it or belittle its significance. Kautsky, we are told, said that Switzer-

land is an exception; Switzerland, if you please, has a special kind of decentralisation, a special history, special geographical conditions, unique distribution of a population that speak different languages, etc., etc.

All these are nothing more than attempts to *evade* the issue. To be sure, Switzerland is an exception in that she is not a single-nation state. But Austria and Russia are also exceptions (or are backward, as Kautsky adds). To be sure, it was only her special, unique historical and social conditions that ensured Switzerland *greater* democracy than most of her European neighbours.

But where does all this come in, if we are speaking of the *model* to be adopted? In the whole world, under present-day conditions, countries in which any particular institution has been founded on *consistent* democratic principles are the exception. Does this prevent us, in our programme, from upholding consistent democracy in all institutions?

Switzerland's special features lie in her history, her geographical and other conditions. Russia's special features lie in the strength of her proletariat, which has no precedent in the epoch of bourgeois revolutions, and in her shocking general backwardness, which objectively necessitates an exceptionally rapid and resolute advance, under the threat of all sorts of drawbacks and reverses.

We are evolving a national programme from the proletarian standpoint; since when has it been recommended that the worst examples, rather than the best, be taken as a model?

At all events, does it not remain an indisputable and undisputed fact that national peace under capitalism has been achieved (insofar as it is achievable) *exclusively* in countries where consistent democracy prevails?

Since this is indisputable, the opportunists' persistent references to Austria instead of Switzerland are nothing but a typical Cadet device, for the Cadets always copy the worst European constitutions rather than the best.

In Switzerland there are *three* official languages, but bills submitted to a referendum are printed in *five* languages, that is to say, in two Romansh dialects, in addition to the three official languages. According to the 1900 census, these two dialects are spoken by 38,651 out of the



3,315,443 inhabitants of Switzerland, i.e., by a little over *one per cent*. In the army, commissioned and non-commissioned officers "are given the fullest freedom to speak to the men in their native language". In the cantons of Graubünden and Wallis (each with a population of a little over a hundred thousand) both dialects enjoy complete equality.\*

The question is: should we advocate and support this, the living *experience* of an advanced country, or borrow from the Austrians *inventions* like "extra-territorial autonomy", which have not yet been tried out anywhere in the world (and not yet been adopted by the Austrians themselves)?

To advocate this invention is to advocate the division of school education according to nationality, and that is a downright harmful idea. The experience of Switzerland proves, however, that the greatest (relative) degree of national peace *can be, and has been, ensured in practice* where you have a consistent (again relative) democracy throughout the state.

"In Switzerland," say people who have studied this question, "there is *no national question* in the East-European sense of the term. The very phrase (national question) is unknown there..." "Switzerland left the struggle between nationalities a long way behind, in 1797-1803."\*\*

This means that the epoch of the great French Revolution, which provided the most democratic solution of the current problems of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, *succeeded* incidentally, *en passant*, in "solving" the national question.

Let the Semkovskys, Liebman, and other opportunists now try to assert that this "exclusively Swiss" solution is *inapplicable* to any uyezd or even part of an uyezd in Russia, where out of a population of only 200,000 forty thousand speak *two dialects* and want to have *complete equality* of language in their area!

Advocacy of complete equality of nations and languages distinguishes only the consistently democratic elements in each nation (i.e., only the proletarians, and *unites* them, not according to nationality, but in a profound and earnest

\* See René Henry: *La Suisse et la question des langues*, Berne, 1907.

\*\* See Ed. Blocher: *Die Nationalitäten in der Schweiz*, Berlin, 1910.

desire to improve the entire system of state. On the contrary, advocacy of "cultural-national autonomy", despite the pious wishes of individuals and groups, *divides the nations* and in fact draws the workers and the bourgeoisie of any one nation closer together (the adoption of this "cultural-national autonomy" by all the Jewish bourgeois parties).

Guaranteeing the rights of a national minority is inseparably linked up with the principle of complete equality. In my article in *Severnaya Pravda* this principle was expressed in almost the same terms as in the later, official and more accurate decision of the conference of Marxists. That decision demands "the incorporation in the constitution of a fundamental law which shall declare null and void all privileges enjoyed by any one nation and all infringements of the rights of a national minority".

Mr. Liebman tries to ridicule this formula and asks: "Who knows what the rights of a national minority are?" Do these rights, he wants to know, include the right of the minority to have "its own programme" for the national schools? How large must the national minority be to have the right to have its own judges, officials, and schools with instruction in its own language? Mr. Liebman wants it to be inferred from these questions that a "*positive*" national programme is essential.

Actually, these questions clearly show what reactionary ideas our Bundist tries to smuggle through under cover of a dispute on supposedly minor details and particulars.

"Its own programme" in its national schools! ... Marxists, my dear nationalist-socialist, have a *general* school programme which demands, for example, an absolutely secular school. As far as Marxists are concerned, *no departure* from this general programme is anywhere or at any time permissible in a democratic state (the question of introducing any "local" subjects, languages, and so forth into it being decided by the local inhabitants). However, from the principle of "taking educational affairs out of the hands of the state" and placing them under the control of the nations, it ensues that we, the workers, must allow the "nations" in our democratic state to spend the people's money on clerical schools! Without being aware of the fact, Mr. Liebman has clearly demonstrated the reactionary nature of "cultural-national autonomy"!

"How large must a national minority be?" This is not defined even in the Austrian programme, of which the Bundists are enamoured. It says (more briefly and less clearly than our programme does): "The rights of the national minorities are protected by a special law to be passed by the Imperial Parliament" (§ 4 of the Brünn programme).

Why has nobody asked the Austrian Social-Democrats the question: what exactly is that law, and exactly which rights and of which minority is it to protect?

That is because all sensible people understand that it is inappropriate and impossible to define particulars in a programme. A programme lays down only fundamental principles. In this case the fundamental principle is implied with the Austrians, and directly expressed in the decision of the latest conference of Russian Marxists. That principle is: no national privileges and no national inequality.

Let us take a concrete example to make the point clear to the Bundist. According to the school census of January 18, 1911, St. Petersburg elementary schools under the Ministry of Public "Education" were attended by 48,076 pupils. Of these, 396, i.e., less than one per cent, were Jews. The other figures are: Rumanian pupils—2, Georgians—1, Armenians—3, etc. Is it possible to draw up a "positive" national programme that will cover this diversity of relationships and conditions? (And St. Petersburg is, of course, far from being the city with the most mixed population in Russia.) Even such specialists in national "subtleties" as the Bundists would hardly be able to draw up such a programme.

And yet, if the constitution of the country contained a fundamental law rendering null and void every measure that infringed the rights of a minority, any citizen would be able to demand the rescinding of orders prohibiting, for example, the hiring, at state expense, of special teachers of Hebrew, Jewish history, and the like, or the provision of state-owned premises for lectures for Jewish, Armenian, or Rumanian children, or even for the one Georgian child. At all events, it is by no means impossible to meet, on the basis of equality, all the reasonable and just wishes of the national minorities, and nobody will say that advocacy of equality is harmful. On the other hand, it would certainly be harmful to advocate division of schools according

to nationality, to advocate, for example, special schools for Jewish children in St. Petersburg, and it would be utterly impossible to set up national schools for *every* national minority, for one, two or three children.

Furthermore, it is impossible, in any country-wide law, to define how large a national minority must be to be entitled to special schools, or to special teachers for supplementary subjects, etc.

On the other hand, a country-wide law establishing equality can be worked out in detail and developed through special regulations and the decisions of regional Diets, and town, Zemstvo, village commune and other authorities.

## 6. CENTRALISATION AND AUTONOMY

In his rejoinder, Mr. Liebman writes:

"Take our Lithuania, the Baltic province, Poland, Volhynia, South Russia, etc.—everywhere you will find a *mixed* population; there is not a single city that does not have a large national minority. However far decentralisation is carried out, different nationalities will always be found living together in different places (chiefly in urban communities), and it is democratism that surrenders a national minority to the national majority. But, as we know, V. I. is opposed to the federal state structure and the boundless decentralisation that exist in the Swiss Federation. The question is: what was his point in citing the example of Switzerland?"

My object in citing the example of Switzerland has already been explained above. I have also explained that the problem of protecting the rights of a national minority can be solved *only* by a country-wide law promulgated in a consistently democratic state that does not depart from the principle of equality. But in the passage quoted above, Mr. Liebman repeats still another of the most common (and most fallacious) arguments (or sceptical remarks) which are usually made against the Marxist national programme, and which, therefore, deserve examination.

Marxists are, of course, opposed to federation and decentralisation, for the simple reason that capitalism requires for its development the largest and most centralised possible states. *Other conditions being equal*, the class-conscious proletariat will always stand for the larger state. It will always fight against medieval particularism, and will always welcome the closest possible economic amalgamation of

large territories in which the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie can develop on a broad basis.

Capitalism's broad and rapid development of the productive forces *calls for* large, politically compact and united territories, since only here can the bourgeois class—together with its inevitable antipode, the proletarian class—unite and sweep away all the old, medieval, caste, parochial, petty-national, religious and other barriers.

The right of nations to self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form independent national states, will be dealt with elsewhere. But while, and insofar as, different nations constitute a single state, Marxists will never, under any circumstances, advocate either the federal principle or decentralisation. The great centralised state is a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to the future socialist unity of the whole world, and only *via* such a state (*inseparably* connected with capitalism), can there be any road to socialism.

It would, however, be inexcusable to forget that in advocating centralism we advocate exclusively *democratic* centralism. On this point all the philistines in general, and the nationalist philistines in particular (including the late Dragomanov), have so confused the issue that we are obliged again and again to spend time clarifying it.

Far from precluding local self-government, with *autonomy* for regions having special economic and social conditions, a distinct national composition of the population, and so forth, democratic centralism necessarily demands *both*. In Russia centralism is constantly confused with tyranny and bureaucracy. This confusion has naturally arisen from the history of Russia, but even so it is quite inexcusable for a Marxist to yield to it.

This can best be explained by a concrete example.

In her lengthy article "The National Question and Autonomy",\* Rosa Luxemburg, among many other curious errors (which we shall deal with below), commits the exceptionally curious one of trying to *restrict* the demand for autonomy to Poland alone.

But first let us see *how* she defines autonomy.

Rosa Luxemburg admits—and being a Marxist she is of

\* *Przegląd Socjaldemokratyczny*,<sup>48</sup> Kraków, 1908 and 1909.

course bound to admit—that all the major and important economic and political questions of capitalist society must be dealt with exclusively by the central parliament of the whole country concerned, not by the autonomous Diets of the individual regions. These questions include tariff policy, laws governing commerce and industry, transport and means of communication (railways, post, telegraph, telephone, etc.), the army, the taxation system, civil\* and criminal law, the general principles of education (for example, the law on purely secular schools, on universal education, on the minimum programme, on democratic school management, etc.), the labour protection laws, and political liberties (right of association), etc., etc.

The autonomous Diets—on the basis of the general laws of the country—should deal with questions of purely local, regional, or national significance. Amplifying this idea in great—not to say excessive—detail, Rosa Luxemburg mentions, for example, the construction of local railways (No. 12, p. 149) and local highways (No. 14-15, p. 376), etc.

Obviously, one cannot conceive of a modern, truly democratic state that did *not* grant such autonomy to every region having any appreciably distinct economic and social features, populations of a specific national composition, etc. The principle of centralism, which is essential for the development of capitalism, is not violated by this (local and regional) autonomy, but on the contrary is applied by it *democratically*, not bureaucratically. The broad, free and rapid development of capitalism would be impossible, or at least greatly impeded, by the *absence* of such autonomy, which *facilitates* the concentration of capital, the development of the productive forces, the unity of the bourgeoisie and the unity of the proletariat on a *country-wide* scale; for bureaucratic interference in *purely* local (regional, national, and other) questions is one of the greatest obstacles to economic and political development in general, and an obstacle to *centralism* in serious, important and fundamental matters in particular.

\* In elaborating her ideas Rosa Luxemburg goes into details, mentioning, for example—and quite rightly—divorce laws (No. 12, p. 162 of the above-mentioned journal).

One cannot help smiling, therefore, when reading how our magnificent Rosa Luxemburg tries to prove, with a very serious air and "purely Marxist" phrases, that the demand for autonomy is applicable *only* to Poland and *only* by way of exception! Of course, there is not a grain of "parochial" patriotism in this; we have here only "practical" considerations ... in the case of Lithuania, for example.

Rosa Luxemburg takes four gubernias—Vilna, Kovno, Grodno and Suvalki—assuring her readers (and herself) that these are inhabited "mainly" by Lithuanians; and by adding the inhabitants of these gubernias together she finds that Lithuanians constitute 23 per cent of the total population, and if Zhmuds are added, they constitute 31 per cent—less than a third. The natural inference is that the idea of autonomy for Lithuania is "arbitrary and artificial" (No. 10, p. 807).

The reader who is familiar with the commonly known defects of our Russian official statistics will quickly see Rosa Luxemburg's mistake. Why take Grodno Gubernia where the Lithuanians constitute only 0.2 per cent, *one-fifth of one per cent*, of the population? Why take the whole Vilna Gubernia and not its Troki Uyezd alone, where the Lithuanians constitute the *majority* of the population? Why take the whole Suvalki Gubernia and put the number of Lithuanians at 52 per cent of the population, and not the Lithuanian uyezds of that gubernia, i.e., five out of the seven, in which Lithuanians constitute 72 per cent of the population?

It is ridiculous to talk about the conditions and demands of modern capitalism while at the same time taking not the "modern", not the "capitalist", but the medieval, feudal and official-bureaucratic administrative divisions of Russia, and in their crudest form at that (gubernias instead of uyezds). Plainly, there can be no question of any serious local reform in Russia until these divisions are abolished and superseded by a *really* "modern" division that really meets the requirements, *not* of the Treasury, *not* of the bureaucracy, *not* of routine, *not* of the landlords, *not* of the priests, but of capitalism; and one of the modern requirements of capitalism is undoubtedly the greatest possible national uniformity of the population, for nationality and language identity are an important factor making for the

complete conquest of the home market and for complete freedom of economic intercourse.

Oddly enough, this obvious mistake of Rosa Luxemburg's is repeated by the Bundist Medem, who sets out to prove, not that Poland's specific features are "exceptional", but that the principle of national-territorial autonomy is unsuitable (the Bundists stand for national extra-territorial autonomy!). Our Bundists and liquidators collect from all over the world all the errors and all the opportunist vacillations of Social-Democrats of different countries and different nations and appropriate to themselves the *worst* they can find in world Social-Democracy. A scrap-book of Bundist and liquidator writings could, taken together, serve as a model Social-Democratic *museum of bad taste*.

Regional autonomy, Medem tells us didactically, is good for a region or a "territory", but not for Lettish, Estonian, or other areas (*okrugs*), which have populations ranging from half a million to two million and areas equal to a gubernia. "*That would not be autonomy, but simply a Zemstvo....* Over this Zemstvo it would be necessary to establish real autonomy" ... and the author goes on to condemn the "break-up" of the old gubernias and uyezds.\*

As a matter of fact, the preservation of the medieval, feudal, official administrative divisions means the "break-up" and mutilation of the conditions of modern capitalism. Only people imbued with the spirit of these divisions can, with the learned air of the expert, speculate on the contraposition of "Zemstvo" and "autonomy", calling for the stereotyped application of "autonomy" to large regions and of the Zemstvo to small ones. Modern capitalism does not demand these bureaucratic stereotypes at all. Why national areas with populations, not only of half a million, but even of 50,000, should not be able to enjoy autonomy; why such areas should not be able to unite in the most diverse ways with neighbouring areas of different dimensions into a single autonomous "territory" if that is convenient or necessary for economic intercourse—these things remain the secret of the Bundist Medem.

We would mention that the Brünn Social-Democratic

\* V. Medem: "A Contribution to the Presentation of the National Question in Russia", *Vestnik Yevropy*,<sup>49</sup> 1912, Nos. 8 and 9.

national programme is based entirely on national-territorial autonomy; it proposes that Austria should be divided into "nationally distinct" areas "instead of the historical crown lands" (Clause 2 of the Brünn programme). We would not go as far as that. A uniform national population is undoubtedly one of the most reliable factors making for free, broad and really modern commercial intercourse. It is beyond doubt that not a single Marxist, and not even a single firm democrat, will stand up for the Austrian crown lands and the Russian gubernias and uyezds (the latter are not as bad as the Austrian crown lands, but they are very bad nevertheless), or challenge the necessity of replacing these obsolete divisions by others that will conform as far as possible with the national composition of the population. Lastly, it is beyond doubt that in order to eliminate all national oppression it is very important to create autonomous areas, however small, with entirely homogeneous populations, towards which members of the respective nationalities scattered all over the country, or even all over the world, could gravitate, and with which they could enter into relations and free associations of every kind. All this is indisputable, and can be argued against only from the hidebound, bureaucratic point of view.

The national composition of the population, however, is *one* of the very important economic factors, but *not the sole and not the most important* factor. Towns, for example, play an *extremely important* economic role under capitalism, and everywhere, in Poland, in Lithuania, in the Ukraine, in Great Russia, and elsewhere, the towns are marked by mixed populations. To cut the town off from the villages and areas that economically gravitate towards them, for the sake of the "national" factor, would be absurd and impossible. That is why Marxists must not take their stand entirely and exclusively on the "national-territorial" principle.

The solution of the problem proposed by the last conference of Russian Marxists is far more correct than the Austrian. On this question, the conference advanced the following proposition:

...must provide "for wide regional autonomy [not for Poland alone, of course, but for all the regions of Russia] and fully democratic local self-government, with the

boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions determined [not by the boundaries of the present gubernias, uyezds, etc., but] by the local inhabitants themselves on the basis of their economic and social conditions, national make-up of the population, etc."\*

Here the national composition of the population is placed on *the same level* as the other conditions (economic first, then social, etc.) which must serve as a basis for determining the new boundaries that will meet the needs of modern capitalism, not of bureaucracy and Asiatic barbarism. The local population alone can "assess" those conditions with full precision, and on that basis the central parliament of the country will determine the boundaries of the autonomous regions and the powers of autonomous Diets.

\* \* \*

We have still to examine the question of the right of nations to self-determination. On the question a whole collection of opportunists of all nationalities—the liquidator Semkovsky, the Bundist Liebman and the Ukrainian nationalist-socialist Lev Yurkevich—have set to work to "popularise" the errors of Rosa Luxemburg. This question, which has been so utterly confused by this whole "collection", will be dealt with in our next article.<sup>50</sup>

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11 and 12

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\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 427-28.—Ed.

Comrades:

The Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma has decided to introduce in the Fourth Duma<sup>52</sup> a Bill to abolish the disabilities of the Jews and other non-Russians. The text of this Bill you will find below.

The Bill aims at abolishing all national restrictions against all nations: Jews, Poles, and so forth. But it deals in particular detail with the restrictions against the Jews. The reason is obvious: no nationality in Russia is so oppressed and persecuted as the Jewish. Anti-Semitism is striking ever deeper root among the propertied classes. The Jewish workers are suffering under a double yoke, both as workers and as Jews. During the past few years, the persecution of the Jews has assumed incredible dimensions. It is sufficient to recall the anti-Jewish pogroms and the Beilis case.

In view of these circumstances, organised Marxists must devote proper attention to the Jewish question.

It goes without saying that the Jewish question can effectively be solved only together with the fundamental issues confronting Russia today. Obviously, we do not look to the nationalist-Purishkevich Fourth Duma to abolish the restrictions against the Jews and other non-Russians. But it is the duty of the working class to make its voice heard. And the voice of the *Russian* workers must be particularly loud in protest against national oppression.

In publishing the text of our Bill we hope that the Jewish workers, the Polish workers, and the workers of the other oppressed nationalities will express their opinion of it and propose amendments, should they deem it necessary.

At the same time we hope that the Russian workers will give particularly strong support to our Bill by their declarations, etc.

In conformity with Article 4 we shall append to the Bill a special list of regulations and laws to be rescinded. This

appendix will cover about a hundred such laws affecting the Jews alone.

#### A BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF ALL DISABILITIES OF THE JEWS AND OF ALL RESTRICTIONS ON THE GROUNDS OF ORIGIN OR NATIONALITY

1. Citizens of all nationalities inhabiting Russia are equal before the law.

2. No citizen of Russia, regardless of sex and religion, may be restricted in political or in any other rights on the grounds of origin or nationality.

3. All and any laws, provisional regulations, riders to laws, and so forth, which impose restrictions upon Jews in any sphere of social and political life, are herewith abolished. Article 767, Vol. IX, which states that "Jews are subject to the general laws in all cases *where no special regulations affecting them have been issued*" is herewith repealed. All and any restrictions of the rights of Jews as regards residence and travel, the right to education, the right to state and public employment, electoral rights, military service, the right to purchase and rent real estate in towns, villages, etc., are herewith abolished, and all restrictions of the rights of Jews to engage in the liberal professions, etc., are herewith abolished.

4. To the present law is appended a list of the laws, orders, provisional regulations, etc., that limit the rights of the Jews, and which are subject to repeal.

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*Collected Works*, Vol. 20,  
pp. 172-73



**BILL ON THE EQUALITY OF NATIONS  
AND THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE RIGHTS  
OF NATIONAL MINORITIES<sup>53</sup>**

1. The boundaries of Russia's administrative divisions, rural and urban (villages, volosts, uyezds, gubernias, parts and sections of towns, suburbs, etc.), shall be revised on the basis of a register of present-day economic conditions and the national composition of the population.

2. This register shall be made by commissions elected by the local population on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot with proportional representation; national minorities too small (under proportional representation) to elect one commission member shall elect a commission member with a consultative voice.

3. The new boundaries shall be endorsed by the central parliament of the country.

4. Local self-government shall be introduced in all areas of the country without exception, on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot with proportional representation; areas with specific geographical, living or economic conditions or a special national composition of the population shall have the right to form autonomous regions with autonomous regional Diets.

5. The limits of jurisdiction exercised by the autonomous Diets and local self-governing bodies shall be determined by the central parliament of the country.

6. All nations in the state are absolutely equal, and all privileges enjoyed by any one nation or any one language are held to be inadmissible and anti-constitutional.

7. The local self-governing bodies and autonomous Diets shall determine the language in which business is to be conducted by state and public establishments in a given area or region, all national minorities having the right to demand absolute safeguards for their language on the basis of the principle of equality, for example, the right to receive replies from state and public establishments in the language in which they are addressed, etc. Measures by Zemstvos,

towns, etc., which infringe the equality of languages enjoyed by the national minorities in financial, administrative, legal and all other fields, shall be considered non-valid and subject to repeal on a protest filed by any citizen of the state, regardless of domicile.

8. Each self-governing unit of the state, rural and urban, shall elect, on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot with proportional representation, boards of education to take care, wholly and autonomously, of expenditures on all the cultural and educational needs of the population subject to the control and management of the town and Zemstvo bodies.

9. In territorial units with a mixed population the number of members on the boards of education shall not be less than twenty. This number (20) may be increased by order of the self-governing bodies and autonomous Diets. Areas shall be considered as having a mixed population where a national minority constitutes up to five per cent of the population.

10. Every national minority of a given self-governing unit that is too small to elect, under proportional representation, one member of the board of education shall be entitled to elect a member with a consultative voice.

11. The proportional share of the funds expended on the cultural and educational needs of the national minorities in a given area shall not be less than the proportional share of the national minorities in the whole population of the given area.

12. A census of the population, with due account of the native language of citizens, shall be carried out every ten years throughout the state, and every five years in regions and areas with a mixed population.

13. All measures by boards of education which in any way infringe the complete equality of nations and languages of the local population or the proportionality of expenditures on cultural and educational needs in conformity with the share of the national minorities in the population, shall be considered non-valid and subject to repeal on a protest of any citizen of the state, regardless of domicile.



## CORRUPTING THE WORKERS WITH REFINED NATIONALISM

The more strongly the working-class movement develops the more frantic are the attempts by the bourgeoisie and the feudalists to suppress it or break it up. Both these methods—suppression by force and disintegration by bourgeois influence—are constantly employed all over the world, in all countries, and one or another of these methods is adopted alternately by the different parties of the ruling classes.

In Russia, particularly after 1905, when the more intelligent members of the bourgeoisie realised that brute force alone was ineffective, all sorts of “progressive” bourgeois parties and groups have been more and more often resorting to the method of *dividing* the workers by advocating different bourgeois ideas and doctrines designed to weaken the struggle of the working class.

One such idea is refined nationalism, which advocates the division and splitting up of the proletariat on the most plausible and specious pretexts, as for example, that of protecting the interests of “national culture”, “national autonomy, or independence”, and so on, and so forth.

The class-conscious workers fight hard against *every kind* of nationalism, both the crude, violent, Black-Hundred nationalism, and that most refined nationalism which preaches the equality of nations *together* with ... the *splitting up* of the workers’ cause, the workers’ organisations and the working-class movement *according to* nationality. Unlike all the varieties of the nationalist bourgeoisie, the class-conscious workers, carrying out the decisions of the recent (summer 1913) conference of the Marxists, stand, not only for the most complete, consistent and fully applied *equality* of nations and languages, but also for the *amalgamation* of the workers of the different nationalities in *united* proletarian organisations of every kind.

Herein lies the fundamental distinction between the national programme of Marxism and that of any bour-

geoisie, be it the most “advanced”.

Recognition of the equality of nations and languages is important to Marxists, not only because they are the most consistent democrats. The interests of proletarian solidarity and comradely unity in the workers’ class struggle call for the fullest equality of nations with a view to removing every trace of national distrust, estrangement, suspicion and enmity. And full equality implies the repudiation of all privileges for any one language and the recognition of the *right* to self-determination for all nations.

To the bourgeoisie, however, the demand for national equality very often amounts in practice to advocating national exclusiveness and chauvinism; they very often couple it with *advocacy* of the division and estrangement of nations. This is *absolutely* incompatible with proletarian *internationalism*, which advocates, not only *closer relations* between nations, but the *amalgamation* of the workers of all nationalities in a given state in *united* proletarian organisations. That is why Marxists emphatically condemn so-called “cultural-national autonomy”, i.e., the idea that educational affairs should be *taken out* of the hands of the state and transferred to the *respective* nationalities. This plan means that in questions of “national culture” educational affairs are to be split up in *national associations* according to the nationalities in the given state federation, each with its own *separate* Diet, educational budgets, school boards, and educational institutions.

This is a plan of refined nationalism, which corrupts and divides the working class. To this plan (of the Bundists, liquidators and Narodniks, i.e., of the various petty-bourgeois groups), the Marxists contrapose the principle of complete equality of nations and languages and go to the extent of denying the necessity of an official language; at the same time they advocate the closest possible relations between the nations, uniform *state* institutions for all nations, uniform school boards, a uniform education policy (secular education!) and the unity of the workers of the different nations in the struggle against the *nationalism of every national bourgeoisie*, a nationalism which is presented in the form of the slogan “national culture” for the purpose of deceiving simpletons.

Let the petty-bourgeois nationalists—the Bundists, the

liquidators, the Narodniks and the writers for *Dzvin*—openly advocate their principle of refined bourgeois nationalism; that is their right. But they should not try to fool the workers, as Madam V. O. does, for example, in issue No. 35 of *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, where she assures her readers that *Za Pravdu* is *opposed* to instruction in schools being given in the native languages!

That is gross slander. The Pravdists not only recognise this right, but are *more consistent* in recognising it than anyone else. The Pravdists, who identified themselves with the conference of Marxists, which declared that *no compulsory official language was necessary*, were the *first* in Russia to recognise *fully* the right to use the native language!

It is crass ignorance to confuse instruction in the native language with "dividing educational affairs within a single state according to nationality", with "cultural-national autonomy", with "taking educational affairs out of the hands of the state".

Nowhere in the world are Marxists (or even democrats) opposed to instruction being conducted in the native language. And *nowhere in the world* have Marxists adopted the programme of "cultural-national autonomy"; Austria is the *only* country in which it was *proposed*.

The example of Finland, as quoted by Madam V. O., is an argument against herself, for in that country the *equality of nations and languages* (which we recognise unreservedly and more consistently than anybody) is recognised and carried out, but *there is no question there about taking educational affairs out of the hands of the state*, about separate national associations to deal with all educational affairs, about partitioning up the school system of a country with national barriers, and so forth.

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## ON THE NATIONAL PRIDE OF THE GREAT RUSSIANS

What a lot of talk, argument and vociferation there is nowadays about nationality and the fatherland! Liberal and radical cabinet ministers in Britain, a host of "forward-looking" journalists in France (who have proved in full agreement with their reactionary colleagues), and a swarm of official Cadet and progressive scribblers in Russia (including several Narodniks and "Marxists")—all have effusive praise for the liberty and independence of their respective countries, the grandeur of the principle of national independence. Here one cannot tell where the venal eulogist of the butcher Nicholas Romanov or of the brutal oppressors of Negroes and Indians ends, and where the common philistine, who from sheer stupidity or spinelessness drifts with the stream, begins. Nor is that distinction important. We see before us an extensive and very deep ideological trend, whose origins are closely interwoven with the interests of the landowners and the capitalists of the dominant nations. Scores and hundreds of millions are being spent every year for the propaganda of ideas advantageous to those classes: it is a pretty big mill-race that takes its waters from all sources—from Menshikov, a chauvinist by conviction, to chauvinists for reason of opportunism or spinelessness, such as Plekhanov and Maslov, Rubanovich and Smirnov, Kropotkin and Burtsev.

Let us, Great-Russian Social-Democrats, also try to define our attitude to this ideological trend. It would be unseemly for us, representatives of a dominant nation in the far east of Europe and a goodly part of Asia, to forget the immense significance of the national question—especially in a country which has been rightly called the "prison of the peoples", and particularly at a time when, in the far east of Europe and in Asia, capitalism is awakening to life and self-consciousness a number of "new" nations, large and small; at a moment when the tsarist monarchy has called up

millions of Great Russians and non-Russians, so as to "solve" a number of national problems in accordance with the interests of the Council of the United Nobility<sup>54</sup> and of the Guchkovs, Krestovnikovs, Dolgorukovs, Kutlers and Rodichevs.

Is a sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian class conscious proletarians? Certainly not! We love our language and our country, and we are doing our very utmost to raise *her* toiling masses (i.e., nine-tenths of *her* population) to the level of a democratic and socialist consciousness. To us it is most painful to see and feel the outrages, the oppression and the humiliation our fair country suffers at the hands of the tsar's butchers, the nobles and the capitalists. We take pride in the resistance to these outrages put up from our midst, from the Great Russians; in *that* midst having produced Radishchev, the Decembrists<sup>55</sup> and the revolutionary commoners of the seventies; in the Great-Russian working class having created, in 1905, a mighty revolutionary party of the masses; and in the Great-Russian peasantry having begun to turn towards democracy and set about overthrowing the clergy and the landed proprietors.

We remember that Chernyshevsky, the Great-Russian democrat, who dedicated his life to the cause of revolution, said half a century ago: "A wretched nation, a nation of slaves, from top to bottom—all slaves."<sup>56</sup> The overt and covert Great-Russian slaves (slaves with regard to the tsarist monarchy) do not like to recall these words. Yet, in our opinion, these were words of genuine love for our country, a love distressed by the absence of a revolutionary spirit in the masses of the Great-Russian people. There was none of that spirit at the time. There is little of it now, but it already exists. We are full of national pride because the Great-Russian nation, *too*, has created a revolutionary class, because it, *too*, has proved capable of providing mankind with great models of the struggle for freedom and socialism, and not only with great pogroms, rows of gallows, dungeons, great famines and great servility to priests, tsars, landowners and capitalists.

We are full of a sense of national pride, and for that very reason we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past (when the landed nobility led the peasants into war to stifle the free-

dom of Hungary, Poland, Persia and China), and our slavish present, when these selfsame landed proprietors, aided by the capitalists, are leading us into a war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine, crush the democratic movement in Persia and China, and strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys and Purishkeviches, who are a disgrace to our Great-Russian national dignity. Nobody is to be blamed for being born a slave; but a slave who not only eschews a striving for freedom but justifies and eulogises his slavery (e.g., calls the throttling of Poland and the Ukraine, etc., a "defence of the fatherland" of the Great Russians)—such a slave is a lickspittle and a boor, who arouses a legitimate feeling of indignation, contempt, and loathing.

"No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations,"<sup>57</sup> said Marx and Engels, the greatest representatives of consistent nineteenth century democracy, who became the teachers of the revolutionary proletariat. And, full of a sense of national pride, we Great-Russian workers want, come what may, a free and independent, a democratic, republican and proud Great Russia, one that will base its relations with its neighbours on the human principle of equality, and not on the feudal principle of privilege, which is so degrading to a great nation. Just because we want that, we say: it is impossible, in the twentieth century and in Europe (even in the far east of Europe), to "defend the fatherland" otherwise than by using every revolutionary means to combat the monarchy, the landowners and the capitalists of one's *own* fatherland, i.e., the *worst* enemies of our country. We say that the Great Russians cannot "defend the fatherland" otherwise than by desiring the defeat of tsarism in any war, this as the lesser evil to nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Great Russia. For tsarism not only oppresses those nine-tenths economically and politically, but also demoralises, degrades, dishonours and prostitutes them by teaching them to oppress other nations and to cover up this shame with hypocritical and quasi-patriotic phrases.

The objection may be advanced that, besides tsarism and under its wing, another historical force has arisen and become strong, viz., Great-Russian capitalism, which is carrying on progressive work by economically centralising and welding together vast regions. This objection, however, does not excuse, but on the contrary still more condemns

our socialist-chauvinists, who should be called tsarist-Pu-rishkevich socialists (just as Marx called the Lassalleans Royal-Prussian socialists). Let us even assume that history will decide in favour of Great-Russian dominant-national capitalism, and against the hundred and one small nations. That is not impossible, for the entire history of capital is one of violence and plunder, blood and corruption. We do not advocate preserving small nations at all costs; *other conditions being equal*, we are decidedly for centralisation and are opposed to the petty-bourgeois ideal of federal relationships. Even if our assumption were true, however, it is, firstly, not our business, or that of democrats (let alone of socialists), to help Romanov-Bobrinsky-Pu-rishkevich throttle the Ukraine, etc. In his own Junker fashion, Bismarck accomplished a progressive historical task, but he would be a fine "Marxist" indeed who, on such grounds, thought of justifying socialist support for Bismarck! Moreover, Bismarck promoted economic development by bringing together the disunited Germans, who were being oppressed by other nations. The economic prosperity and rapid development of Great Russia, however, require that the country be liberated from Great-Russian oppression of other nations—that is the difference that our admirers of the true-Russian would-be Bismarcks overlook.

Secondly, if history were to decide in favour of Great-Russian dominant-nation capitalism, it follows hence that the *socialist* role of the Great-Russian proletariat, as the principal driving force of the communist revolution engendered by capitalism, will be all the greater. The proletarian revolution calls for a prolonged education of the workers in the spirit of the *fullest* national equality and brotherhood. Consequently, the interests of the Great-Russian proletariat require that the masses be systematically educated to champion—most resolutely, consistently, boldly and in a revolutionary manner—complete equality and the right to self-determination for all the nations oppressed by the Great Russians. The interests of the Great Russians' national pride (understood, not in the slavish sense) coincide with the *socialist* interests of the Great-Russian (and all other) proletarians. Our model will always be Marx, who, after living in Britain for decades and becoming half-English,

demanding freedom and national independence for Ireland in the interests of the socialist movement of the British workers.

In the second hypothetical case we have considered, our home-grown socialist-chauvinists, Plekhanov, etc., etc., will prove traitors, not only to their own country—a free and democratic Great Russia, but also to the proletarian brotherhood of all the nations of Russia, i.e., to the cause of socialism.

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THE DRAFT RESOLUTION  
PROPOSED BY THE LEFT SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS  
TO THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL  
SOCIALIST CONFERENCE<sup>58</sup>

The present war has been engendered by imperialism. Capitalism has already achieved that highest stage. Society's productive forces and the magnitudes of capital have outgrown the narrow limits of the individual national states. Hence the striving on the part of the Great Powers to enslave other nations and to seize colonies as sources of raw material and spheres of investment of capital. The whole world is merging into a single economic organism; it has been carved up among a handful of Great Powers. The objective conditions for socialism have fully matured, and the present war is a war of the capitalists for privileges and monopolies that might delay the downfall of capitalism.

The socialists, who seek to liberate labour from the yoke of capital and who defend the world-wide solidarity of the workers, are struggling against any kind of oppression and inequality of nations. When the bourgeoisie was a progressive class, and the overthrow of feudalism, absolutism and oppression by other nations stood on the historical order of the day, the socialists, as invariably the most consistent and most resolute of democrats, recognised "defence of the fatherland" in the meaning implied by those aims, and in that meaning alone. Today too, should a war of the oppressed nations against the oppressor Great Powers break out in the east of Europe or in the colonies, the socialists' sympathy would be wholly with the oppressed.

The war of today, however, has been engendered by an entirely different historical period, in which the bourgeoisie, from a progressive class, has turned reactionary. With both groups of belligerents, this war is a war of slaveholders, and is designed to preserve and extend slavery; it is a war for the repartitioning of colonies, for the "right" to oppress other nations, for privileges and monopolies for Great-Power capital, and for the perpetuation of wage slavery by splitting up the workers of the different countries

and crushing them through reaction. That is why, on the part of both warring groups, all talk about "defence of the fatherland" is deception of the people by the bourgeoisie. Neither the victory of any one group nor a return to the *status quo* can do anything either to protect the freedom of most countries in the world from imperialist oppression by a handful of Great Powers, or to ensure that the working class keep even its present modest cultural gains. The period of a relatively peaceful capitalism has passed, never to return. Imperialism has brought the working class unparalleled intensification of the class struggle, want, and unemployment, a higher cost of living, and the strengthening of oppression by the trusts, of militarism, and the political reactionaries, who are raising their heads in all countries, even the freest.

In reality, the "defence of the fatherland" slogan in the present war is tantamount to a defence of the "right" of one's "own" national bourgeoisie to oppress other nations; it is in fact a national-liberal labour policy, an alliance between a negligible section of the workers and their "own" national bourgeoisie, against the mass of the proletarians and the exploited. Socialists who pursue such a policy are in fact chauvinists, social-chauvinists. The policy of voting for war credits, of joining governments, of *Burgfrieden*,\* and the like, is a betrayal of socialism. Nurtured by the conditions of the "peaceful" period, which has now come to an end, opportunism has now matured to a degree that calls for a break with socialism; it has become an open enemy to the proletariat's movement for liberation. The working class cannot achieve its historic aims without waging a most resolute struggle against both forthright opportunism and social-chauvinism (the majorities in the Social-Democratic parties of France, Germany and Austria; Hyndman, the Fabians<sup>59</sup> and the trade unionists<sup>60</sup> in Britain; Rubanovich, Plekhanov and *Nasha Zarya* in Russia, etc.) and the so-called Centre, which has surrendered the Marxist stand to the chauvinists.

Unanimously adopted by socialists of the entire world in anticipation of that very kind of war among the Great Powers which has now broken out, the Basle Manifesto of

\* A class truce.—Ed.

1912<sup>61</sup> distinctly recognised the imperialist and reactionary nature of that war, declared it criminal for workers of one country to shoot at workers of another country, and proclaimed the approach of the *proletarian revolution* in connection with that very war. Indeed, the war is creating a revolutionary situation, is engendering revolutionary sentiments and unrest in the masses, is arousing in the finer part of the proletariat a realisation of the perniciousness of opportunism, and is intensifying the struggle against it. The masses' growing desire for peace expresses their disappointment, the defeat of the bourgeois lie regarding the defence of the fatherland, and the awakening of their revolutionary consciousness. In utilising that temper for their revolutionary agitation, and not shying away in that agitation from considerations of the defeat of their "own" country the socialists will not deceive the people with the hope that, without the revolutionary overthrow of the present-day governments, a possibility exists of a speedy democratic peace, which will be durable in some degree and will preclude any oppression of nations, a possibility of disarmament, etc. Only the social revolution of the proletariat opens the way towards peace and freedom for the nations.

The imperialist war is ushering in the era of the social revolution. All the objective conditions of recent times have put the proletariat's revolutionary mass struggle on the order of the day. It is the duty of socialists, while making use of every means of the working class's legal struggle, to subordinate each and every of those means to this immediate and most important task, develop the workers' revolutionary consciousness, rally them in the international revolutionary struggle, promote and encourage any revolutionary action, and do everything possible to turn the imperialist war between the peoples into a civil war of the oppressed classes against their oppressors, a war for the expropriation of the class of capitalists, for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, and the realisation of socialism.

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## THE QUESTION OF PEACE

The question of peace as an immediate programme of action for the socialists, and in this connection the question of peace terms, presents a universal interest. One can only be grateful to *Berner Tagwacht*<sup>62</sup> for its efforts to pose the question, not from the usual petty-bourgeois national angle, but from one that is genuinely proletarian and internationalist. The editorial note in No. 73 ("*Friedenssehnsucht*"), that the German Social-Democrats who wish for peace must break (*sich lossagen*) with the policies of the Junker government, was excellent. Also excellent was Comrade A. P.'s attack (Nos. 73 and 75) on the "pompous airs of impotent phrase-mongers" (*Wichtigtuerei machtloser Schönredner*), who are vainly attempting to solve the peace question from the petty-bourgeois point of view.

Let us see how this question should be posed by socialists.

The peace slogan can be advanced either in connection with definite peace terms, or without any conditions at all, as a struggle, not for a definite kind of peace, but for peace in general (*Frieden ohne weiters*). In the latter case, we obviously have a slogan that is not only non-socialist but entirely devoid of meaning and content. Most people are definitely in favour of peace in general, including even Kitchener, Joffre, Hindenburg, and Nicholas the Bloodstained, for *each* of them wants an end to the war. The trouble is that every one of them advances peace terms that are imperialist (i.e., predatory and oppressive, towards other peoples), and to the advantage of his "own" nation. Slogans must be brought forward so as to enable the masses, through propaganda and agitation, to see the unbridgeable distinction between socialism and capitalism (imperialism), and not for the purpose of *reconciling* two hostile classes and two hostile political lines, with the aid of a formula that "unites" the most different things.



To continue: can the socialists of different countries be united on definite *terms* of peace? If so, such terms must undoubtedly include the recognition of the right to self-determination for all nations, and also renunciation of all "annexations", i.e., infringements of that right. If, however, that right is recognised only for *some* nations, then you are defending the *privileges* of certain nations, i.e., you are a nationalist and imperialist, not a socialist. If, however, that right is recognised for *all* nations, then you cannot single out Belgium alone, for instance; you must take *all* the oppressed peoples, both in Europe (the Irish in Britain, the Italians in Nice, the Danes in Germany, fifty-seven per cent of Russia's population, etc.) *and outside of Europe*, i.e., all colonies. Comrade A. P. has done well to remind us of them. Britain, France, and Germany have a total population of some one hundred and fifty million, whereas the populations they oppress in the colonies number over four hundred million! The essence of the imperialist war, i.e., a war waged for the interests of the capitalists, consists, not only in the war being waged with the aim of oppressing new nations, of carving up the colonies, but also in its being waged primarily by the advanced nations, which *oppress* a number of other peoples comprising the *majority* of the earth's population.

The German Social-Democrats, who justify the seizure of Belgium or reconcile themselves to it, are actually imperialists and nationalists, not Social-Democrats, since they defend the "right" of the German bourgeoisie (partly also of the German workers) to oppress the Belgians, the Alsations, the Danes, the Poles, the Negroes in Africa, etc. They are not socialists, but *menials* to the German bourgeoisie, whom they are aiding to rob other nations. The Belgian socialists who demand the liberation and indemnification of Belgium *alone* are also actually defending a demand of the Belgian bourgeoisie, who would go on plundering the 15,000,000 Congolese population and obtaining concessions and privileges in other countries. The Belgian bourgeoisie's foreign investments amount to something like three thousand million francs. Safeguarding the profits from these investments by using every kind of fraud and machinations is the *real* "national interest" of "gallant Belgium". The same applies in a still greater degree to

Russia, Britain, France and Japan.

It follows that if the demand for the freedom of nations is not to be a false phrase covering up the imperialism and the nationalism of *certain individual* countries, it must be extended to *all* peoples and to *all* colonies. Such a demand, however, is obviously meaningless *unless* it is accompanied by a series of revolutions in *all* the advanced countries. Moreover, it cannot be accomplished without a successful *socialist* revolution.

Should this be taken to mean that socialists can remain indifferent to the peace demand that is coming from ever greater masses of the people? By no means. The slogans of the workers' class-conscious vanguard are one thing, while the spontaneous demands of the masses are something quite different. The yearning for peace is one of the most important *symptoms* revealing the beginnings of *disappointment* in the bourgeois lie about a war of "liberation", the "defence of the fatherland", and similar falsehoods that the class of capitalists beguiles the mob with. This symptom should attract the closest attention from socialists. All efforts must be bent towards *utilising* the masses' desire for peace. But *how* is it to be utilised? To recognise the peace *slogan* and repeat it would mean encouraging "pompous airs of impotent [and frequently what is worse: *hypocritical*] phrase-mongers"; it would mean *deceiving* the people with illusion that the existing governments, the present-day master classes, are *capable*—without being "taught" a lesson (or rather without being eliminated) by a series of revolutions—of granting a peace in any way satisfactory to democracy and the working class. Nothing is more harmful than such deception. Nothing throws more dust in the eyes of the workers, nothing imbues them with a more deceptive idea about the *absence of deep* contradictions between capitalism and socialism, nothing *embellishes* capitalist slavery more than this deception does. No, we must make use of the desire for peace so as to explain to the masses that the benefits they expect from peace cannot be obtained without a series of revolutions.

An end to wars, peace among the nations, the cessation of pillaging and violence—such is our ideal, but only bourgeois sophists can seduce the masses with this ideal, if the latter is divorced from a direct and immediate call for revo-



lutionary action. The ground for such propaganda is prepared; to practise that propaganda, one need only break with the opportunists, those allies of the bourgeoisie, who are hampering revolutionary work both directly (even to the extent of passing information to the authorities) and indirectly.

The slogan of self-determination of nations should also be advanced in connection with the imperialist era of capitalism. We do not stand for the *status quo*, or for the philistine Utopia of *standing aside* in great wars. We stand for a revolutionary struggle against imperialism, i.e., capitalism. Imperialism consists in a striving of nations that oppress a number of other nations to extend and increase that oppression and to repartition the colonies. That is why the question of self-determination of nations today hinges on the conduct of socialists of the *oppressor* nations. A socialist of any of the oppressor nations (Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, the United States of America, etc.) who does not recognise and does not struggle for the right of oppressed nations to self-determination (i.e., the right to secession) is in reality a chauvinist, not a socialist.

Only this point of view can lead to a sincere and consistent struggle against imperialism, to a proletarian, not a philistine approach (today) to the national question. Only this point of view can lead to a consistent application of the principle of combating any form of the oppression of nations; it removes mistrust among the proletarians of the oppressor and oppressed nations, makes for a united international struggle for the socialist revolution (i.e., for the only accomplishable regime of complete national equality), as distinct from the philistine Utopia of freedom for all small states in general, under capitalism.

This is the point of view adopted by our Party, i.e., by those Social-Democrats of Russia who have rallied around the Central Committee. This was the point of view adopted by Marx when he taught the proletariat that "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations". It was from this point of view that Marx demanded the separation of Ireland from Britain, this in the interests of the freedom movement, not only of the Irish, but especially of the *British* workers.

If the socialists of Britain do not recognise and uphold Ireland's right to secession, if the French do not do the

same for Italian Nice, the Germans for Alsace-Lorraine, Danish Schleswig, and Poland, the Russians for Poland, Finland, the Ukraine, etc., and the Poles for the Ukraine—if all the socialists of the "Great" Powers, i.e., the great robber powers, do not uphold that right in respect of the colonies, it is solely because they are in fact imperialists, not socialists. It is ridiculous to cherish illusions that people who do not fight for "the right to self-determination" of the oppressed nations, while they themselves belong to the oppressor nations, are capable of practising socialist policies.

Instead of leaving it to the hypocritical phrase-mongers to deceive the people by phrases and promises concerning the possibility of a democratic peace, socialists must explain to the masses the impossibility of anything resembling a democratic peace, unless there are a series of revolutions and unless a revolutionary struggle is waged in every country against the *respective* government. Instead of allowing the bourgeois politicians to deceive the peoples with talk about the freedom of nations, socialists must explain to the masses in the *oppressor* nations that they cannot hope for their liberation, as long as they help oppress other nations, and do not recognise and uphold the right of those nations to self-determination, i.e., the freedom to secede. That is the socialist, as distinct from the imperialist, policy to be applied to all countries, on the question of peace and the national question. True, this line is in most cases incompatible with the laws punishing high treason—but so is the Basle resolution, which has been so shamefully betrayed by almost all the socialists of the oppressor nations.

The choice is between socialism and submission to the laws of Joffre and Hindenburg, between revolutionary struggle and servility to imperialism. There is no middle course. The greatest harm is caused to the proletariat by the hypocritical (or obtuse) authors of the "middle-course" policy.

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## Note

To clarify the problems presented to socialism as a result of the present imperialist war, it is useful to cast a glance at the various European countries, so as to learn to distinguish between national modifications and details of the general picture, and the fundamental and essential. Distance lends clarity to the view. The less the resemblance between Italy and Russia, the more interesting it is, in certain respects, to compare imperialism and socialism in the two countries.

In the present note, we intend only to call attention to material on this problem, as provided by a bourgeois professor, Roberto Michels, in his book *Italian Imperialism* and by a socialist T. Barboni, in a book entitled *Internationalism or Class Nationalism? (The Italian Proletariat and the European War)*,\* both of which have been published since the outbreak of the war. The garrulous Michels, who is just as superficial as he is in his other writings, hardly touches upon the economic aspect of imperialism. His book, however, contains a collection of valuable material on the origin of Italian imperialism and on the transition that comprises the essence of the times and is so manifest in Italy, namely, the transition from a period of wars for national liberation to a period of imperialist and reactionary wars of plunder. Revolutionary-democratic Italy, i.e., revolutionary-bourgeois Italy, the Italy that cast off the yoke of Austria, the Italy of the times of Garibaldi, is changing before our very eyes into an Italy that is oppressing other peoples and plundering Turkey and Austria, an Italy of a crude, repulsively reactionary and rapacious bourgeoisie whose

\* Roberto Michels, *L'imperialismo italiano*, Milano, 1914; T. Barboni, *Internazionalismo o nazionalismo di classe? (Il proletariato d'Italia e la guerra europea)*. Edito dall'autore a Campione d'Intelvi (provincia di Como), 1915.

mouth waters at the prospect of a share in the loot. Like any respectable professor, Michels, of course, considers that his servility to the bourgeoisie is "scientific objectivism"; he calls this sharing of the loot "partitioning of that part of the world which still remains in the hands of debilitated peoples" (p. 179). Disdainfully rejecting as "Utopian" the viewpoint of socialists hostile towards colonial policies of any kind, Michels repeats the arguments of those who think that Italy, judging by the density of her population and the intensity of emigration from that country "should have been the second colonial power", second only to Britain. Michels repudiates by a reference to Britain the argument that forty per cent of the Italian people are illiterate, and that even today cholera riots, etc., take place there. Was not Britain, he asks, a country of unparalleled poverty, humiliation, famine among the working masses, and widespread drunkenness, misery, and squalor in the city slums, in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the British bourgeoisie were so successfully laying the foundations of their present colonial power?

It must be admitted that, from the bourgeois standpoint, this argument is unassailable. Colonial policies and imperialism are not unsound but curable disorders of capitalism (the way philistines think, together with Kautsky); they are an inevitable consequence of the very foundations of capitalism. Competition among individual enterprises inevitably leads either to their becoming ruined or ruining others; competition between individual countries confronts each of them with the alternative of falling behind, ever running the risk of becoming a second Belgium, or else ruining and conquering other countries, thus elbowing their way to a place among the "Great" Powers.

Italian imperialism has been called "poor people's imperialism" (*l'imperialismo della povera gente*), because of the country's poverty and the utter destitution of the masses of Italian emigrants. Arturo Labriola, the Italian chauvinist, who differs from his former opponent, G. Plekhanov, only in that he somewhat sooner revealed his social-chauvinism, which he reached *via* petty-bourgeois semi-anarchism, not petty-bourgeois opportunism, wrote in his booklet on the Tripolitanian war (1912):

"It is obvious that we are fighting, not only against the

Turks ... but also against the intrigues, the intimidations, the money, and the armies of plutocratic Europe, which cannot tolerate that small nations should dare to make a single gesture or to say a single word that will compromise its iron hegemony" (p. 92). Corradini, leader of the Italian nationalists, declared at the same time: "Just as socialism was a method of freeing the proletariat from the bourgeoisie, nationalism will be for us Italians a method of freeing ourselves from the French, the Germans, the British, the North and South Americans, who are our bourgeoisie."

Any country which has more colonies, capital and armies than "we" have, deprives "us" of certain privileges, certain profits or super-profits. Just as among individual capitalists super-profits go to the one whose machinery is superior to the average or who owns certain monopolies, so among nations the one that is economically better off than the others gets super-profits. It is the business of the bourgeoisie to fight for privileges and advantages for its national capital, and to fool the nation or the common folk (with the aid of Labriola and Plekhanov) by passing off for a war of national liberation the imperialist struggle for the "right" to plunder others.

Prior to the Tripolitanian war, Italy did not plunder other nations, at least to no large extent. Is this not an intolerable slight to the national pride? The Italians are oppressed and humiliated as compared with other nations. Italian emigration was nearly 100,000 annually in the seventies of the last century; it now stands at between 500,000 and 1,000,000. All these people are paupers, driven from their country by starvation in the literal sense of the word. All of them provide labour power for the worst paid branches of industry; this mass inhabit the most crowded, poverty-stricken, and squalid sections of the American and European cities. From 1,000,000 in 1881, the number of Italians abroad rose to 5,500,000 in 1910, the vast majority of this mass living in the rich and "great" countries, for whom the Italians are the crudest, most unskilled, poor and defenceless labouring mass. Here are the main countries using cheap Italian labour: France—400,000 Italians in 1910 (240,000 in 1881); Switzerland—135,000 (41,000 in 1881); Austria—80,000 (40,000); Germany—180,000 (7,000); the United States of America—1,779,000 (170,000); Bra-

zil—1,500,000 (82,000); Argentina—1,000,000 (254,000). "Glorious" France, which 125 years ago fought for freedom, and therefore calls her present war for her own and the British slave-holders' "colonial rights" a war of liberation, houses hundreds of thousands of Italian workers in areas that are virtually ghettos. The petty-bourgeois *canaille* of this "great" nation do all they can to keep these people at a distance, and insult and humiliate them in every possible way. The Italians are contemptuously dubbed "Macaroni" (the Great-Russian reader should recall how many contemptuous nicknames are current in our country for non-Russians whose birth does not entitle them to the noble dominant-nation privileges that serve the Purishkeviches as a means of oppressing *both* the Great-Russian *and* the other peoples of Russia). In 1896 France, that great nation, concluded a treaty with Italy, by which the latter undertook not to increase the number of Italian schools in Tunisia! Since then the Italian population of Tunisia has increased sixfold. There are 105,000 Italians in Tunisia, as against 35,000 Frenchmen, but there are only 1,167 holders of land among the former, with an aggregate of 83,000 hectares, whereas the latter include 2,395 landowners who have grabbed 700,000 hectares in that colony. How can one fail to agree with Labriola and other Italian "Plekhanovites" that Italy is "entitled" to possess her colony in Tripoli, oppress Slavs in Dalmatia, carve up Asia Minor, etc.?<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> It is highly instructive to note the connection between Italy's transformation into an imperialist country and the government's agreeing to electoral reform. The latter increased the number of voters from 3,219,000 to 8,562,000, in other words, it introduced "almost" universal suffrage. Prior to the Tripolitanian war, Giolitti, who carried out the reform, was bitterly opposed to it. "The motivation of the change of line by the government" and the moderate parties, says Michels, "was essentially patriotic. Notwithstanding their long-standing theoretical aversion from a colonial policy, the industrial workers, and more so the lower strata, fought against the Turks with perfect discipline and obedience, contrary to all expectations. Such slavish behaviour towards the government's policy merited a reward to induce the proletariat to persevere along this new road. The President of the Council of Ministers declared in Parliament that, by his patriotic behaviour on the battlefield of Libya, the Italian worker had proved to the country that he had reached the highest stage of political maturity. He who is capable of sacrificing his life

Just as Plekhanov supports the Russian war of "liberation" against the German striving to turn Russia into a colony, Leonida Bissolati, leader of the Reformist Party, has raised an outcry against the "invasion of Italy by foreign capital" (p. 97), namely, German capital in Lombardy, British in Sicily, French in Piacentino, Belgian in the street-car enterprises, etc., etc., etc.

The question has been squarely put and one must acknowledge that the European war has done humanity enormous good by actually confronting hundreds of millions of people of various nationalities with an alternative: *either* defend, with rifle or pen, directly or indirectly, in any form whatever, the dominant-nation and national privileges in general, as well as the prerogative or the claims of one's "own" bourgeoisie, that is to say, be its adherent or lackey; *or* else utilise any struggle, particularly the clash of arms for dominant-nation privileges, so as to unmask and overthrow every government, in the first place *one's own*, by means of the revolutionary action of an internationally united proletariat. There is no middle road; in other words, the attempt to take a middle stand means, in effect, covertly taking the side of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

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for a noble cause is also capable of defending the interests of the country as a voter, and he therefore has a right that the state should consider him worthy of full political rights" (p. 177). The Italian Ministers are good talkers! Still better are the German "radical" Social-Democrats who are repeating the following servile argument: "We have done 'our' duty by helping 'you' to loot foreign countries, but 'you' do not wish to give 'us' universal suffrage in Prussia...."

## THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Like most programmes or tactical resolutions of the Social-Democratic parties, the Zimmerwald Manifesto<sup>63</sup> proclaims the "right of nations to self-determination". In Nos. 252 and 253 of *Berner Tagwacht*, Parabellum has called "illusory" "the struggle for the non-existent right to self-determination", and *has contraposed* to it "the proletariat's revolutionary mass struggle against capitalism", while at the same time *assuring* us that "we are against annexations" (an assurance is repeated *five* times in Parabellum's article), and against all violence against nations.

The arguments advanced by Parabellum in support of his position boil down to an assertion that today all national problems, like those of Alsace-Lorraine, Armenia, etc., are problems of imperialism; that capital has outgrown the framework of national states; that it is impossible to turn the clock of history back to the obsolete ideal of national states, etc.

Let us see whether Parabellum's reasoning is correct.

First of all, it is Parabellum who is looking backward, not forward, when, in opposing working-class acceptance "of the ideal of the national state", he looks towards Britain, France, Italy, Germany, i.e., countries where the movement for national liberation is a thing of the past, and not towards the East, towards Asia, Africa, and the colonies, where this movement is a thing of the present and the future. Mention of India, China, Persia, and Egypt will be sufficient.

Furthermore, imperialism means that capital has outgrown the framework of national states; it means that national oppression has been extended and heightened on a new historical foundation. Hence it follows that, despite Parabellum, we must *link* the revolutionary struggle for socialism with a revolutionary programme on the national question.

From what Parabellum says, it appears that, *in the name*

of the socialist revolution, he scornfully rejects a consistently revolutionary programme in the sphere of democracy. He is wrong to do so. The proletariat cannot be victorious except through democracy, i.e., by giving full effect to democracy and by linking with each step of its struggle democratic demands formulated in the most resolute terms. It is absurd to *contrapose* the socialist revolution and the revolutionary struggle against capitalism to a *single* problem of democracy, in this case, the national question. We must *combine* the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary programme and tactics on *all* democratic demands: a republic, a militia, the popular election of officials, equal rights for women, the self-determination of nations, etc. While capitalism exists, these demands—all of them—can only be accomplished as an exception, and even then in an incomplete and distorted form. Basing ourselves on the democracy already achieved, and exposing its incompleteness under capitalism, we demand the overthrow of capitalism, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, as a necessary basis both for the abolition of the poverty of the masses and for the *complete* and *all-round* institution of *all* democratic reforms. Some of these reforms will be started before the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, others *in the course* of that overthrow, and still others after it. The social revolution is not a single battle, but a period covering a series of battles over all sorts of problems of economic and democratic reform, which are consummated only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It is for the sake of this final aim that we must formulate *every one* of our democratic demands in a consistently revolutionary way. It is quite conceivable that the workers of some particular country will overthrow the bourgeoisie *before* even a single fundamental democratic reform has been fully achieved. It is, however, quite inconceivable that the proletariat, as a historical class, will be able to defeat the bourgeoisie, unless it is prepared for that by being educated in the spirit of the most consistent and resolutely revolutionary democracy.

Imperialism means the progressively mounting oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of Great Powers; it means a period of wars between the latter to extend and consolidate the oppression of nations; it means a period in which the masses of the people are deceived by hypocriti-

cal social-patriots, i.e., individuals who, *under the pretext* of the "freedom of nations", "the right of nations to self-determination", and "defence of the fatherland", justify and defend the oppression of the majority of the world's nations by the Great Powers.

That is why the focal point in the Social-Democratic programme must be that division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the *essence* of imperialism, and is *deceitfully* evaded by the social-chauvinists and Kautsky. This division is not significant from the angle of bourgeois pacifism or the philistine Utopia of peaceful competition among independent nations under capitalism, but it is most significant from the angle of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. It is from this division that *our* definition of the "right of nations to self-determination" must follow, a definition that is consistently democratic, revolutionary, and *in accord* with the general task of the immediate struggle for socialism. It is for that right, and in a struggle to achieve sincere recognition for it, that the Social-Democrats of the oppressor nations must demand that the oppressed nations should have the right of secession, for otherwise recognition of equal rights for nations and of international working-class solidarity would in fact be merely empty phrase-mongering, sheer hypocrisy. On the other hand, the Social-Democrats of the oppressed nations must attach primer significance to the unity and the merging of the workers of the oppressed nations with those of the oppressor nations; otherwise these Social-Democrats will involuntarily become the allies of their own national *bourgeoisie*, which *always* betrays the interests of the people and of democracy, and is *always* ready, in its turn, to annex territory and oppress other nations.

The way in which the national question was posed at the end of the sixties of the past century may serve as an instructive example. The petty-bourgeois democrats, to whom any thought of the class struggle and of the socialist revolution was wholly alien, pictured to themselves a Utopia of peaceful competition among free and equal nations, under capitalism. In examining the immediate tasks of the social revolution, the Proudhonists totally "negated" the national question and the right of nations to self-determination. Marx ridiculed French Proudhonism and showed

the affinity between it and French chauvinism. ("All Europe must and will sit quietly on their hindquarters until the gentlemen in France abolish poverty"... "By the negation of nationalities they appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the model French nation.") Marx demanded the separation of Ireland from Britain "although after the separation there may come federation", demanding it, not from the standpoint of the petty-bourgeois Utopia of a peaceful capitalism, or from considerations of "justice for Ireland",<sup>64</sup> but from the standpoint of the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the oppressor, i.e., British, nation against capitalism. The freedom of that nation has been cramped and mutilated by the fact that it has oppressed another nation. The British proletariat's internationalism would remain a hypocritical phrase if they did not demand the separation of Ireland. Never in favour of petty states, or the splitting up of states in general, or the principle of federation, Marx considered the separation of an oppressed nation to be a step towards federation, and consequently, not towards a split, but towards concentration, both political and economic, but concentration on the basis of democracy. As Parabellum sees it, Marx was probably waging an "illusory struggle" in demanding separation for Ireland. Actually, however, this demand alone presented a consistently revolutionary programme; it alone was in accord with internationalism; it alone advocated concentration along non-imperialist lines.

The imperialism of our days has led to a situation in which the Great-Power oppression of nations has become general. The view that a struggle must be conducted against the social-chauvinism of the dominant nations, who are now engaged in an imperialist war to enhance the oppression of nations, and are oppressing most of the world's nations and most of the earth's population—this view must be decisive, cardinal and basic in the national programme of Social-Democracy.

Take a glance at the present trends in Social-Democratic thinking on this subject. The petty-bourgeois Utopians, who dreamt of equality and peace among nations under capitalism, have been succeeded by the social-imperialists. In combating the former, Parabellum is tilting at windmills, thereby unwittingly playing in the hands of the social-im-

perialists. What is the social-chauvinists' programme on the national question?

They either entirely deny the right to self-determination, using arguments like those advanced by Parabellum (Cunow, Parvus, the Russian opportunists Semkovsky, Liebman, and others), or they recognise that right in a patently hypocritical fashion, namely, without applying it to those very nations that are oppressed by their own nation or by her military allies (Plekhanov, Hyndman, all the pro-French patriots, then Scheidemann, etc., etc.). The most plausible formulation of the social-chauvinist lie, one that is therefore most dangerous to the proletariat, is provided by Kautsky. In word, he is in favour of the self-determination of nations; in word, he is for the Social-Democratic Party "*die Selbständigkeit der Nationen allseitig [!] und rückhaltlos [?] achtet und fordert*"\* (*Die Neue Zeit* No. 33, II, S. 241, May 21, 1915). In deed, however, he has adapted the national programme to the prevailing social-chauvinism, distorted and docked it; he gives no precise definition of the duties of the socialists in the oppressor nations, and patently falsifies the democratic principle itself when he says that to demand "state independence" (*staatliche Selbständigkeit*) for every nation would mean demanding "too much" ("*zu viel*", *Die Neue Zeit* No. 33, II, S. 77, April 16, 1915). "National autonomy", if you please, is enough! The principal question, the one the imperialist bourgeoisie will not permit discussion of, namely, the question of the boundaries of a state that rests upon the oppression of nations, is evaded by Kautsky, who, to please that bourgeoisie, has thrown out of the programme what is most essential. The bourgeoisie are ready to promise all the "national equality" and "national autonomy" you please, so long as the proletariat remain within the framework of legality and "peacefully" submit to them on the question of the state boundaries! Kautsky has formulated the national programme of Social-Democracy in a reformist, not a revolutionary manner.

Parabellum's national programme, or, to be more precise, his assurances that "we are against annexations", has the

\* "comprehensively [!] and unreservedly [?] respecting and demanding the independence of nations".—Ed.



wholehearted backing of the *Parteivorstand*,\* Kautsky, Plekhanov and Co., for the very reason that the programme does not expose the dominant social-patriots. Bourgeois pacifists would also endorse that programme. Parabellum's splendid *general* programme ("a revolutionary mass struggle against capitalism") serves him—as it did the Proudhonists of the sixties—not for the drawing up, in conformity with it and in its spirit, of a programme on the national question that is uncompromising and equally revolutionary, but in order to leave the way open to the social-patriots. In our imperialist times most socialists throughout the world are members of nations that oppress other nations and strive to extend that oppression. That is why our "struggle against annexations" will be meaningless and will not scare the social-patriots in the least, unless we declare that a socialist of an oppressor nation who does not conduct both peacetime and wartime propaganda in favour of freedom of secession for oppressed nations, is no socialist and no internationalist, but a chauvinist! The socialist of an oppressor nation who fails to conduct such propaganda in defiance of government bans, i.e., in the free, i.e., in the illegal press, is a hypocritical advocate of equal rights for nations!

Parabellum has *only* a single sentence on Russia, which has not yet completed its bourgeois-democratic revolution:

*"Selbst das wirtschaftlich sehr zurückgebliebene Russland hat in der Haltung der Polnischen, Lettischen, Armenischen Bourgeoisie gezeigt, dass nicht nur die militärische Bewachung es ist, die die Völker in diesem 'Zuchthaus der Völker' zusammenhält, sondern Bedürfnisse der kapitalistischen Expansion, für die das ungeheure Territorium ein glänzender Boden der Entwicklung ist."\**

That is not a "Social-Democratic standpoint" but a liberal-bourgeois one, not an internationalist, but a Great-Russian chauvinist standpoint. Parabellum, who is such a fine fighter against the German social-patriots, seems to have little

\* The Executive of the German Social-Democratic Party.—Ed.

\*\* "Even economically very backward Russia has proved, in the stand taken by the Polish, Lettish and Armenian bourgeoisie, that it is not only the military guard that keeps together the peoples in that 'prison of peoples', but also the need for capitalist expansion, for which the vast territory is a splendid ground for development."—Ed.

knowledge of Russian chauvinism. For Parabellum's wording to be converted into a Social-Democratic postulate and for Social-Democratic conclusions to be drawn from it, it should be modified and supplemented as follows:

Russia is a prison of peoples, not only because of the military-feudal character of tsarism and not only because the Great-Russian bourgeoisie support tsarism, but also because the Polish, etc., bourgeoisie have sacrificed the freedom of nations and democracy in general for the interests of capitalist expansion. The Russian proletariat cannot march at the head of the people towards a victorious democratic revolution (which is its immediate task) or fight alongside its brothers, the proletarians of Europe, for a socialist revolution, without immediately demanding, fully and "*rückhaltlos*",\* for all nations oppressed by tsarism, the freedom to secede from Russia. This we demand, not independently of our revolutionary struggle for socialism, but because this struggle will remain a hollow phrase if it is not linked up with a revolutionary approach to all questions of democracy, including the national question. We demand freedom of self-determination, i.e., independence, i.e., freedom of secession for the oppressed nations, not because we have dreamt of splitting up the country economically, or of the ideal of small states, but, on the contrary, because we want large states and the closer unity and even fusion of nations, only on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is *inconceivable* without the freedom to secede. Just as Marx, in 1869, demanded the separation of Ireland, not for a split between Ireland and Britain, but for a subsequent free union between them, not so as to secure "justice for Ireland", but in the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the British proletariat, we in the same way consider the refusal of Russian socialists to demand freedom of self-determination for nations, in the sense we have indicated above, to be a direct betrayal of democracy, internationalism and socialism.

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\* "unreservedly".—Ed.



## THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

### Theses

#### 1. IMPERIALISM, SOCIALISM AND THE LIBERATION OF OPPRESSED NATIONS

Imperialism is the highest stage in the development of capitalism. In the foremost countries capital has outgrown the bounds of national states, has replaced competition by monopoly and has created all the objective conditions for the achievement of socialism. In Western Europe and in the United States, therefore, the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of capitalist governments and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie is on the order of the day. Imperialism forces the masses into this struggle by sharpening class contradictions on a tremendous scale, by worsening the conditions of the masses both economically—trusts, high cost of living—and politically—the growth of militarism, more frequent wars, more powerful reaction, the intensification and expansion of national oppression and colonial plunder. Victorious socialism must necessarily establish a full democracy and, consequently, not only introduce full equality of nations but also realise the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination, i.e., the right to free political separation. Socialist parties which did not show by all their activity, both now, during the revolution, and after its victory, that they would liberate the enslaved nations and build up relations with them on the basis of a free union—and free union is a false phrase without the right to secede—these parties would be betraying socialism.

Democracy, of course, is also a form of state which must disappear when the state disappears, but that will only take place in the transition from conclusively victorious and consolidated socialism to full communism.

#### 2. THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

The socialist revolution is not a single act, it is not one battle on one front, but a whole epoch of acute class

conflicts, a long series of battles on all fronts, i.e., on all questions of economics and politics, battles that can only end in the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It would be a radical mistake to think that the struggle for democracy was capable of diverting the proletariat from the socialist revolution or of hiding, overshadowing it, etc. On the contrary, in the same way as there can be no victorious socialism that does not practise full democracy, so the proletariat cannot prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie without an all-round, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy.

It would be no less a mistake to remove one of the points of the democratic programme, for example, the point on the self-determination of nations, on the grounds of it being "impracticable" or "illusory" under imperialism. The contention that the right of nations to self-determination is impracticable within the bounds of capitalism can be understood either in the absolute, economic sense, or in the conditional, political sense.

In the first case it is radically incorrect from the standpoint of theory. First, in that sense, such things as, for example, labour money, or the abolition of crises, etc., are impracticable under capitalism. It is absolutely untrue that the self-determination of nations is *equally* impracticable. Secondly, even the one example of the secession of Norway from Sweden in 1905 is sufficient to refute "impracticability" in that sense. Thirdly, it would be absurd to deny that some slight change in the political and strategic relations of, say, Germany and Britain, might today or tomorrow make the formation of a new Polish, Indian and other similar state fully "practicable". Fourthly, finance capital, in its drive to expand, can "freely" buy or bribe the freest democratic or republican government and the elective officials of any, even an "independent", country. The domination of finance capital and of capital in general is not to be abolished by *any* reforms in the sphere of political democracy; and self-determination belongs wholly and exclusively to this sphere. This domination of finance capital, however, does not in the least nullify the significance of political democracy as a freer, wider and clearer *form* of class oppression and class struggle. Therefore all arguments about the "impracticability", in the economic sense, of one of the

demands of political democracy under capitalism are reduced to a theoretically incorrect definition of the general and basic relationships of capitalism and of political democracy as a whole.

In the second case the assertion is incomplete and inaccurate. This is because not only the right of nations to self-determination, but *all* the fundamental demands of political democracy are only partially "practicable" under imperialism, and then in a distorted form and by way of exception (for example, the secession of Norway from Sweden in 1905). The demand for the immediate liberation of the colonies that is put forward by all revolutionary Social-Democrats is also "impracticable" under capitalism without a series of revolutions. But from this it does not by any means follow that Social-Democracy should reject the immediate and most determined struggle for *all* these demands—such a rejection would only play into the hands of the bourgeoisie and reaction—but, on the contrary, it follows that these demands must be formulated and put through in a revolutionary and not a reformist manner, going beyond the bounds of bourgeois legality, breaking them down, going beyond speeches in parliament and verbal protests, and drawing the masses into decisive action, extending and intensifying the struggle for every fundamental democratic demand up to a direct proletarian onslaught on the bourgeoisie, i.e., up to the socialist revolution that expropriates the bourgeoisie. The socialist revolution may flare up not only through some big strike, street demonstration or hunger riot or a military insurrection or colonial revolt, but also as a result of a political crisis such as the Dreyfus case<sup>65</sup> or the Zabern incident,<sup>66</sup> or in connection with a referendum on the secession of an oppressed nation, etc.

Increased national oppression under imperialism does not mean that Social-Democracy should reject what the bourgeoisie call the "utopian" struggle for the freedom of nations to secede but, on the contrary, it should make greater use of the conflicts that arise in this sphere, *too*, as grounds for mass action and for revolutionary attacks on the bourgeoisie.

### 3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS RELATION TO FEDERATION

The right of nations to self-determination implies exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to free political separation from the oppressor nation. Specifically, this demand for political democracy implies complete freedom to agitate for secession and for a referendum on secession by the seceding nation. This demand, therefore, is not the equivalent of a demand for separation, fragmentation and the formation of small states. It implies only a consistent expression of struggle against all national oppression. The closer a democratic state system is to complete freedom to secede the less frequent and less ardent will the desire for separation be in practice, because big states afford indisputable advantages, both from the standpoint of economic progress and from that of the interests of the masses and, furthermore, these advantages increase with the growth of capitalism. Recognition of self-determination is not synonymous with recognition of federation as a principle. One may be a determined opponent of that principle and a champion of democratic centralism but still prefer federation to national inequality as the only way to full democratic centralism. It was from this standpoint that Marx, who was a centralist, preferred even the federation of Ireland and England to the forcible subordination of Ireland to the English.

The aim of socialism is not only to end the division of mankind into tiny states and the isolation of nations in any form, it is not only to bring the nations closer together but to integrate them. And it is precisely in order to achieve this aim that we must, on the one hand, explain to the masses the reactionary nature of Renner and Otto Bauer's idea of so-called "cultural and national autonomy"<sup>67</sup> and, on the other, demand the liberation of oppressed nations in a clearly and precisely formulated political programme that takes special account of the hypocrisy and cowardice of socialists in the oppressor nations, and not in general nebulous phrases, not in empty declamations and not by way of "relegating" the question until socialism has been achieved. In the same way as mankind can arrive

at the abolition of classes only through a transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through a transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede.

#### 4. THE PROLETARIAN-REVOLUTIONARY PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTION OF THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS

The petty bourgeoisie had put forward not only the demand for the self-determination of nations but *all* the points of our democratic minimum programme long *before*, as far back as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They are still putting them *all* forward in a utopian manner because they fail to see the class struggle and its increased intensity under democracy, and because they believe in "peaceful" capitalism. That is the exact nature of the utopia of a peaceful union of equal nations under imperialism which deceives the people and which is defended by Kautsky's followers. The programme of Social-Democracy, as a counter-balance to this petty-bourgeois, opportunist utopia, must postulate the division of nations into oppressor and oppressed as basic, significant and inevitable under imperialism.

The proletariat of the oppressor nations must not confine themselves to general, stereotyped phrases against annexation and in favour of the equality of nations in general, such as any pacifist bourgeois will repeat. The proletariat cannot remain silent on the question of the *frontiers* of a state founded on national oppression, a question so "unpleasant" for the imperialist bourgeoisie. The proletariat must struggle against the enforced retention of oppressed nations within the bounds of the given state, which means that they must fight for the right to self-determination. The proletariat must demand freedom of political separation for the colonies and nations oppressed by "their own" nation. Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words; neither confidence nor class solidarity would be possible between the workers of the oppressed and the oppressor nations; the hypocrisy of the reformists and Kautskyites, who defend

self-determination but remain silent about the nations oppressed by "their own" nation and kept in "their own" state by force, would remain unexposed.

On the other hand, the socialists of the oppressed nations must, in particular, defend and implement the full and unconditional unity, including organisational unity, of the workers of the oppressed nation and those of the oppressor nation. Without this it is impossible to defend the independent policy of the proletariat and their class solidarity with the proletariat of other countries in face of all manner of intrigues, treachery and trickery on the part of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations persistently utilise the slogans of national liberation to deceive the workers; in their internal policy they use these slogans for reactionary agreements with the bourgeoisie of the dominant nation (for example, the Poles in Austria and Russia who come to terms with reactionaries for the oppression of the Jews and Ukrainians); in their foreign policy they strive to come to terms with one of the rival imperialist powers for the sake of implementing their predatory plans (the policy of the small Balkan states, etc.).

The fact that the struggle for national liberation against one imperialist power may, under certain conditions, be utilised by another "great" power for its own, equally imperialist, aims, is just as unlikely to make the Social-Democrats refuse to recognise the right of nations to self-determination as the numerous cases of bourgeois utilisation of republican slogans for the purpose of political deception and financial plunder (as in the Romance countries, for example) are unlikely to make the Social-Democrats reject their republicanism.\*

\* It would, needless to say, be quite ridiculous to reject the right to self-determination on the grounds that it implies "defence of the fatherland". With equal right, i. e., with equal lack of seriousness, the social-chauvinists of 1914-16 refer to any of the demands of democracy (to its republicanism, for example) and to any formulation of the struggle against national oppression in order to justify "defence of the fatherland". Marxism deduces the defence of the fatherland in wars, for example, in the great French Revolution or the wars of Garibaldi, in Europe, and the renunciation of defence of the fatherland in the imperialist war of 1914-16, from an analysis of the concrete historical peculiarities of each individual war and never from any "general principle", or any one point of a programme.

### 5. MARXISM AND PROUDHONISM ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

In contrast to the petty-bourgeois democrats, Marx regarded every democratic demand without exception not as an absolute, but as an historical expression of the struggle of the masses of the people, led by the bourgeoisie, against feudalism. There is not one of these demands which could not serve and has not served, under certain circumstances, as an instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie for deceiving the workers. To single out, in this respect, one of the demands of political democracy, specifically, the self-determination of nations, and to oppose it to the rest, is fundamentally wrong in theory. In practice, the proletariat can retain its independence only by subordinating its struggle for all democratic demands, not excluding the demand for a republic, to its revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, in contrast to the Proudhonists who "denied" the national problem "in the name of social revolution", Marx, mindful in the first place of the interests of the proletarian class struggle in the advanced countries, put the fundamental principle of internationalism and socialism in the foreground—namely, that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations. It was from the standpoint of the interests of the German workers' revolutionary movement that Marx in 1848 demanded that victorious democracy in Germany should proclaim and grant freedom to the nations oppressed by the Germans. It was from the standpoint of the revolutionary struggle of the English workers that Marx, in 1869, demanded the separation of Ireland from England, and added: "...even if federation should follow upon separation."<sup>68</sup> Only by putting forward this demand was Marx really educating the English workers in the spirit of internationalism. Only in this way could he counterpose the opportunists and bourgeois reformism—which even to this day, half a century later, has not carried out the Irish "reform"—with a revolutionary solution of the given historical task. Only in this way could Marx maintain—unlike the apologists of capital who shout that the freedom of small nations to secede is utopian and impracticable and that not only economic but also political concen-

tration is progressive—that this concentration is progressive when it is *non-imperialist*, and that nations should not be brought together by force, but by a free union of the proletarians of all countries. Only in this way could Marx, in opposition to the merely verbal, and often hypocritical, recognition of the equality and self-determination of nations, advocate the revolutionary action of the masses in the settlement of national questions *as well*. The imperialist war of 1914-16, and the Augean stables of hypocrisy on the part of the opportunists and Kautskyites that it has exposed, have strikingly confirmed the correctness of Marx's policy, which should serve as a model for all advanced countries, for all of them are now oppressing other nations.\*

### 6. THREE TYPES OF COUNTRIES WITH RESPECT TO THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS

In this respect, countries must be divided into three main types.

First, the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe and the United States. In these countries progressive bourgeois national movements came to an end long ago. Every one of these "great" nations oppresses other nations both in the colonies and at home. The tasks of the proletariat of these ruling nations are the same as those of the proletariat in England in the nineteenth century

\* Reference is often made—e.g., recently by the German chauvinist Lensch in *Die Glocke*<sup>69</sup> Nos. 8 and 9—to the fact that Marx's objection to the national movement of certain peoples, to that of the Czechs in 1848, for example, refutes the necessity of recognising the self-determination of nations from the Marxist standpoint. But this is incorrect, for in 1848 there were historical and political grounds for drawing a distinction between "reactionary" and revolutionary-democratic nations. Marx was right to condemn the former and defend the latter. The right to self-determination is one of the demands of democracy which must naturally be subordinated to its general interests. In 1848 and the following years these general interests consisted primarily in combating tsarism.

in relation to Ireland.\*

Secondly, Eastern Europe: Austria, the Balkans and particularly Russia. Here it was the twentieth century that particularly developed the bourgeois-democratic national movements and intensified the national struggle. The tasks of the proletariat in these countries, both in completing their bourgeois-democratic reforms, and rendering assistance to the socialist revolution in other countries, cannot be carried out without championing the right of nations to self-determination. The most difficult and most important task in this is to unite the class struggle of the workers of the oppressor nations with that of the workers of the oppressed nations.

Thirdly, the semi-colonial countries, such as China, Persia and Turkey, and all the colonies, which have a combined population of 1,000 million. In these countries the bourgeois-democratic movements either have hardly begun, or have still a long way to go. Socialists must not only demand the unconditional and immediate liberation of the colonies without compensation—and this demand in its political expression signifies nothing else than the recognition of the right to self-determination; they must also render determined support to the more revolutionary elements in the bourgeois-democratic movements for national liberation in these countries and assist their uprising—or revolutionary war, in the event of one—against the imperialist powers that oppress them.

\* In some small states which have kept out of the war of 1914-16—Holland and Switzerland, for example—the bourgeoisie makes extensive use of the "self-determination of nations" slogan to justify participation in the imperialist war. This is a motive inducing the Social-Democrats in such countries to repudiate self-determination. Wrong arguments are being used to defend a correct proletarian policy, the repudiation of "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war. This results in a distortion of Marxism in theory, and in practice leads to a peculiar small-nation narrow-mindedness, neglect of the *hundreds of millions* of people in nations that are enslaved by the "dominant" nations. Comrade Gorter, in his excellent pamphlet *Imperialism, War and Social-Democracy* wrongly rejects the principle of self-determination of nations, but correctly *applies* it, when he demands the *immediate* granting of "political and national independence" to the Dutch Indies and exposes the Dutch opportunists who refuse to put forward this demand and to fight for it.

## 7. SOCIAL-CHAUVINISM AND THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS

The imperialist epoch and the war of 1914-16 has laid special emphasis on the struggle against chauvinism and nationalism in the leading countries. There are two main trends on the self-determination of nations among the social-chauvinists, that is, among the opportunists and Kautskyites, who hide the imperialist, reactionary nature of the war by applying to it the "defence of the fatherland" concept.

On the one hand, we see quite undisguised servants of the bourgeoisie who defend annexation on the plea that imperialism and political concentration are progressive, and who deny what they call the utopian, illusory, petty-bourgeois, etc., right to self-determination. This includes Cunow, Parvus and the extreme opportunists in Germany, some of the Fabians and trade union leaders in England, and the opportunists in Russia: Semkovsky, Liebman, Yurkevich, etc.

On the other hand, we see the Kautskyites, among whom are Vandervelde, Renaudel, many pacifists in Britain and France, and others. They favour unity with the former and in practice are completely identified with them; they defend the right to self-determination hypocritically and by words alone: they consider "excessive" ("*zu viel verlangt*": Kautsky in *Die Neue Zeit*, May 21, 1915) the demand for free political separation, they do not defend the necessity for revolutionary tactics on the part of the socialists of the oppressor nations in particular but, on the contrary, obscure their revolutionary obligations, justify their opportunism, make easy for them their deception of the people, and avoid the very question of the *frontiers* of a state forcefully retaining underprivileged nations within its bounds, etc.

Both are equally opportunist, they prostitute Marxism, having lost all ability to understand the theoretical significance and practical urgency of the tactics which Marx explained with Ireland as an example.

As for annexations, the question has become particularly urgent in connection with the war. But what is annexation? It is quite easy to see that a protest against annexations either boils down to recognition of the self-determination of nations or is based on the pacifist phrase that defends the *status quo* and is hostile to *any*, even revolu-

tionary, violence. Such a phrase is fundamentally false and incompatible with Marxism.

### 8. THE CONCRETE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

The socialist revolution may begin in the very near future. In this case the proletariat will be faced with the immediate task of winning power, expropriating the banks and effecting other dictatorial measures. The bourgeoisie—and especially the intellectuals of the Fabian and Kautskyite type—will, at such a moment, strive to split and check the revolution by foisting limited, democratic aims on it. Whereas any purely democratic demands are in a certain sense liable to act as a hindrance to the revolution, provided the proletarian attack on the pillars of bourgeois power has begun, the necessity to proclaim and grant liberty to *all* oppressed peoples (i.e., their right to self-determination) will be as urgent in the socialist revolution as it was for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in, say, Germany in 1848, or Russia in 1905.

It is possible, however, that five, ten or more years will elapse before the socialist revolution begins. This will be the time for the revolutionary education of the masses in a spirit that will make it impossible for socialist-chauvinists and opportunists to belong to the working-class party and gain a victory, as was the case in 1914-16. The socialists must explain to the masses that British socialists who do not demand freedom to separate for the colonies and Ireland, German socialists who do not demand freedom to separate for the colonies, the Alsatians, Danes and Poles, and who do not extend their revolutionary propaganda and revolutionary mass activity directly to the sphere of struggle against national oppression, or who do not make use of such incidents as that at Zabern for the broadest illegal propaganda among the proletariat of the oppressor nation, for street demonstrations and revolutionary mass action—Russian socialists who do not demand freedom to separate for Finland, Poland, the Ukraine, etc., etc.—that such socialists act as chauvinists and lackeys of bloodstained and filthy imperialist monarchies and the imperialist bourgeoisie.

### 9. THE ATTITUDE OF RUSSIAN AND POLISH SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS AND OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL TO SELF-DETERMINATION

The differences between the revolutionary Social-Democrats of Russia and the Polish Social-Democrats on the question of self-determination came out into the open as early as 1903, at the Congress which adopted the Programme of the R.S.D.L. Party, and which, despite the protest by the Polish Social-Democrat delegation, inserted Clause 9, recognising the right of nations to self-determination. Since then the Polish Social-Democrats have on no occasion repeated, in the name of their party, the proposal to remove Clause 9 from our Party's Programme, or to replace it by some other formula.

In Russia, where the oppressed nations account for no less than 57 per cent of the population, or over 100 million, where they occupy mostly the border regions, where some of them are more highly cultured than the Great Russians, where the political system is especially barbarous and medieval, where the bourgeois-democratic revolution has not been consummated—there, in Russia, recognition of the right of nations oppressed by tsarism to free secession from Russia is absolutely obligatory for Social-Democrats, for the furtherance of their democratic and socialist aims. Our Party, re-established in January 1912, adopted a resolution in 1913 reaffirming the right to self-determination and explaining it in precisely the above concrete sense<sup>70</sup>. The rampage of Great-Russian chauvinism in 1914-16 both among the bourgeoisie and among the opportunist socialists (Rubanovich, Plekhanov, *Nashe Dyelo*,<sup>71</sup> etc.) has given us even more reason to insist on this demand and to regard those who deny it as actual supporters of Great-Russian chauvinism and tsarism. Our Party declares that it most emphatically declines to accept any responsibility for such actions against the right to self-determination.

The latest formulation of the position of the Polish Social-Democrats on the national question (the declaration of the Polish Social-Democrats at the Zimmerwald Conference<sup>72</sup>) contains the following ideas:

The declaration condemns the German and other governments that regard the "Polish regions" as a pawn in the forth-



coming compensation game, "depriving the Polish people of the opportunity of deciding their own fate themselves". "Polish Social-Democrats resolutely and solemnly protest against the carving up and parcelling out of a whole country" .... They flay the socialists who left to the Hohenzollerns "to liberate the oppressed peoples". They express the conviction that only participation in the approaching struggle of the international revolutionary proletariat, the struggle for socialism, "will break the fetters of national oppression and destroy all forms of foreign rule, will ensure for the Polish people the possibility of free all-round development as an equal member of a concord of nations". The declaration recognises that "for the Poles" the war is "doubly fratricidal". (*Bulletin of the International Socialist Committee*<sup>7</sup> No. 2, September 27, 1915, p. 15. Russian translation in the symposium *The International and the War*, p. 97).

These propositions do not differ in substance from recognition of the right of nations to self-determination, although their political formulations are even vaguer and more indeterminate than those of most programmes and resolutions of the Second International<sup>8</sup>. Any attempt to express these ideas as precise political formulations and to define their applicability to the capitalist system or only to the socialist system will show even more clearly the mistake the Polish Social-Democrats make in denying the self-determination of nations.

The decision of the London International Socialist Congress of 1896, which recognised the self-determination of nations, should be supplemented on the basis of the above theses by specifying: (1) the particular urgency of this demand under imperialism, (2) the political conventionalism and class content of all the demands of political democracy, the one under discussion included, (3) the necessity to distinguish the concrete tasks of the Social-Democrats of the oppressor nations from those of the Social-Democrats of the oppressed nations, (4) the inconsistent, purely verbal recognition of self-determination by the opportunists and the Kautskyites, which is, therefore, hypocritical in its political significance, (5) the actual identity of the chauvinists and those Social-Democrats, especially those of the Great Powers (Great Russians, Anglo-

Americans, Germans, French, Italians, Japanese, etc.), who do not uphold the freedom to secede for colonies and nations oppressed by "their own" nations, (6) the necessity to subordinate the struggle for the demand under discussion and for all the basic demands of political democracy directly to the revolutionary mass struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeois governments and for the achievement of socialism.

The introduction into the International of the viewpoint of certain small nations, especially that of the Polish Social-Democrats, who have been led by their struggle against the Polish bourgeoisie, which deceives the people with its nationalist slogans, to the incorrect denial of self-determination, would be a theoretical mistake, a substitution of Proudhonism for Marxism implying in practice involuntary support for the most dangerous chauvinism and opportunism of the Great-Power nations.

*Editorial Board of Sotsial-Demokrat,  
Central Organ of R.S.D.L.P.*

*Postscript.* In *Die Neue Zeit* for March 3, 1916, which has just appeared, Kautsky openly holds out the hand of Christian reconciliation to Austerlitz, a representative of the foulest German chauvinism, rejecting freedom of separation for the oppressed nations of Hapsburg Austria but recognising it for Russian Poland, as a menial service to Hindenburg and Wilhelm II. One could not have wished for a better self-exposure of Kautskyism!

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At last there has appeared in Germany, illegally, without any adaptation to the despicable Junker censorship, a Social-Democratic pamphlet dealing with questions of the war! The author, who evidently belongs to the "Left-radical" wing of the Party, takes the name of Junius (which in Latin means junior) and gives his pamphlet the title: *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*. Appended are the "Theses on the Tasks of International Social-Democracy", which have already been submitted to the Berne I.S.C. (International Socialist Committee) and published in No. 3 of its *Bulletin*<sup>76</sup>; the theses were drafted by the *Internationale* group, which in the spring of 1915 published one issue of a magazine under that title (with articles by Zetkin, Mehring, R. Luxemburg, Thalheimer, Duncker, Ströbel and others), and which in the winter of 1915-16 convened a conference of Social-Democrats from all parts of Germany where these theses were adopted.<sup>77</sup>

The pamphlet, the author says in the introduction dated January 2, 1916, was written in April 1915, and published "without any alteration". "Outside circumstances" had prevented its earlier publication. The pamphlet is devoted not so much to the "crisis of Social-Democracy" as to an analysis of the war, to refuting the legend of it being a war for national liberation, to proving that it is an imperialist war on the part of Germany as well as on the part of the other Great Powers, and to a revolutionary criticism of the behaviour of the official party. Written in a very lively style, Junius's pamphlet has undoubtedly played and will continue to play an important role in the struggle against the ex-Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which has deserted to the bourgeoisie and the Junkers, and we extend our hearty greetings to the author.

To the Russian reader who is familiar with the Social-Democratic literature in Russian published abroad in

1914-16, the Junius pamphlet does not offer anything new in principle. In reading this pamphlet and comparing the arguments of this German revolutionary Marxist with what had been stated, for example, in the Manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party (September-November 1914), in the Berne resolutions (March 1915)\* and in the numerous commentaries on them, it only becomes clear that Junius's arguments are very incomplete and that he makes two mistakes. Before proceeding with a criticism of Junius's faults and errors we must strongly emphasise that this is done for the sake of self-criticism, which is so necessary to Marxists, and of submitting to an all-round test the views which must serve as the ideological basis of the Third International. On the whole, the Junius pamphlet is a splendid Marxist work, and its defects are, in all probability, to a certain extent accidental.

The chief defect in Junius's pamphlet, and what marks a definite step backward compared with the legal (although immediately suppressed) magazine, *Internationale*, is its silence regarding the connection between social-chauvinism (the author uses neither this nor the less precise term social-patriotism) and opportunism. The author rightly speaks of the "capitulation" and collapse of the German Social-Democratic Party and of the "treachery" of its "official leaders", but he goes no further. The *Internationale*, however, did criticise the "Centre", i.e., Kautskyism, and quite properly poured ridicule on it for its spinelessness, its prostitution of Marxism and its servility to the opportunists. This same magazine *began* to expose the true role of the opportunists by revealing, for example, the very important fact that on August 4, 1914, the opportunists came out with an ultimatum, a ready-made decision to vote for war credits in any case.<sup>78</sup> Neither the Junius pamphlet nor the theses say anything about opportunism or about Kautskyism! This is wrong from the standpoint of theory, for it is impossible to account for the "betrayal" without linking it up with opportunism as a trend with a long history behind it, the history of the whole Second International. It is a mistake from the practical political standpoint, for it is impossible either to

\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 25-34, 158-64.—Ed.

understand the "crisis of Social-Democracy", or overcome it, without clarifying the meaning and the role of *two trends*—the openly opportunist trend (Legien, David, etc.) and the tacitly opportunist trend (Kautsky and Co.). This is a step backward compared with the historic article by Otto Rühle in *Vorwärts*<sup>79</sup> of January 12, 1916, in which he directly and openly pointed out that a split in the Social-Democratic Party of Germany was *inevitable* (the editors of *Vorwärts* replied by repeating honeyed and hypocritical Kautskyite phrases, for they were unable to advance a single material argument to disprove the assertion that there were *already* two parties in existence, and that these two parties could not be reconciled). It is astonishingly inconsistent, because the *Internationale's* thesis No. 12 *directly* states that it is necessary to create a "new" International, owing to the "treachery" of the "official representatives of the socialist parties of the leading countries" and their "adoption of the principles of bourgeois imperialist policies". It is clearly quite absurd to suggest that the old Social-Democratic Party of Germany, or the party which tolerates Legien, David and Co., would participate in a "new" International.

We do not know why the *Internationale* group took this step backward. A very great defect in revolutionary Marxism in Germany as a whole is its lack of a compact illegal organisation that would systematically pursue its own line and educate the masses in the spirit of the new tasks; such an organisation would also have to take a definite stand on opportunism and Kautskyism. This is all the more necessary now, since the Germany revolutionary Social-Democrats have been deprived of their last two daily papers; the one in Bremen (*Bremer Bürger-Zeitung*<sup>80</sup>), and the one in Brunswick (*Volksfreund*<sup>81</sup>), both of which have gone over to the Kautskyites. The International Socialists of Germany (I.S.D.) group *alone* clearly and definitely remains at its post.<sup>82</sup>

Some members of the *Internationale* group have evidently once again slid down into the morass of unprincipled Kautskyism. Ströbel, for instance, went so far as to drop a curtsy in *Die Neue Zeit* to Bernstein and Kautsky! And only the other day, on July 15, 1916, he had an article in the papers entitled "Pacifism and Social-Democracy", in

which he defends the most vulgar type of Kautskyite pacifism. As for Junius, he strongly opposes Kautsky's fantastic schemes like "disarmament", "abolition of secret diplomacy", etc. There may be two trends within the *Internationale* group: a revolutionary trend and a trend inclining to Kautskyism.

The first of Junius's erroneous propositions is embodied in the fifth thesis of the *Internationale* group. "National wars are no longer possible in the epoch (era) of this unbridled imperialism. National interests serve only as an instrument of deception, in order to place the working masses at the service of their mortal enemy, imperialism." The beginning of the fifth thesis, which concludes with the above statement, discusses the nature of the *present* war as an imperialist war. It may be that this negation of national wars generally is either an oversight, or an accidental overstatement in emphasising the perfectly correct idea that the *present* war is an imperialist war, not a national war. This is a mistake that must be examined, for various Social-Democrats, in view of the false assertions that the *present* war is a national war, have likewise mistakenly denied the possibility of any national war.

Junius is perfectly right in emphasising the decisive influence of the "imperialist atmosphere" of the *present* war, in maintaining that behind Serbia stands Russia, "behind Serbian nationalism stands Russian imperialism", and that the participation of, say, Holland in the war would *like-wise* be imperialist, for, first, Holland would be defending her colonies and, second, would be allied with one of the *imperialist* coalitions. That is irrefutable in respect to the *present* war. And when Junius stresses what for him is most important, namely, the struggle against the "fantom of national war", "which at present holds sway over Social-Democratic policies" (p. 81), then it must be admitted that his views are both correct and fully to the point.

The only mistake, however, would be to exaggerate this truth, to depart from the Marxist requirement of concreteness, to apply the appraisal of this war to all wars possible under imperialism, to ignore the national movements *against* imperialism. The sole argument in defence of the thesis, "national wars are no longer possible", is that the world has been divided among a small group of "great"

imperialist powers and for that reason any war, even if it starts as a national war, is *transformed* into an imperialist war involving the interest of one of the imperialist powers or coalitions (Junius, p. 81).

The fallacy of this argument is obvious. That all dividing lines, both in nature and society, are conventional and dynamic, and that *every* phenomenon might, under certain conditions, be transformed into its opposite, is, of course, a basic proposition of Marxist dialectics. A national war *might* be transformed into an imperialist war and *vice versa*. Here is an example: the wars of the Great French Revolution began as national wars and indeed were such. They were revolutionary wars—the defence of the great revolution against a coalition of counter-revolutionary monarchies. But when Napoleon founded the French Empire and subjugated a number of big, viable and long-established national European states, these national wars of the French became imperialist wars and *in turn* led to wars of national liberation *against* Napoleonic imperialism.

Only a sophist can disregard the difference between an imperialist and a national war on the grounds that one *might* develop into the other. Not infrequently have dialectics served—and the history of Greek philosophy is an example—as a bridge to sophistry. But we remain dialecticians and we combat sophistry not by denying the possibility of all transformations in general, but by analysing the *given* phenomenon in its concrete setting and development.

Transformation of the present imperialist war of 1914-16 into a national war is highly improbable, for the class that represents *progressive* development is the proletariat which is objectively striving to transform it into a civil war against the bourgeoisie. Also this: there is no very considerable difference between the forces of the two coalitions, and international finance capital has created a reactionary bourgeoisie everywhere. But such a transformation should *not* be proclaimed *impossible*: if the European proletariat remains impotent, say, for twenty years; if the present war *ends* in victories like Napoleon's and in the subjugation of a number of viable national states; if the transition to socialism of non-European imperialism (pri-

marily Japanese and American) is also held up for twenty years by a war between these two countries, for example, then a great national war in Europe would be possible. It would hurl Europe *back* several decades. That is improbable. But *not* impossible, for it is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong to regard the course of world history as smooth and always in a forward direction, without occasional gigantic leaps back.

Further. National wars waged by colonies and semi-colonies in the imperialist era are not only probable but *inevitable*. About 1,000 million people, or *over half* of the world's population, live in the colonies and semi-colonies (China, Turkey, Persia). The national liberation movements there are either already very strong, or are growing and maturing. Every war is the continuation of politics by other means. The continuation of national liberation politics in the colonies will *inevitably* take the form of national wars *against* imperialism. Such wars *might* lead to an imperialist war of the present "great" imperialist powers, but on the other hand they might not. It will depend on many factors.

Example: Britain and France fought the Seven Years' War for the possession of colonies. In other words, they waged an imperialist war (which is possible on the basis of slavery and primitive capitalism as well as on the basis of modern highly developed capitalism). France suffered defeat and lost some of her colonies. Several years later there began the national liberation war of the North American States against Britain alone. France and Spain, then in possession of some parts of the present United States, concluded a friendship treaty with the States in rebellion against Britain. This they did out of hostility to Britain, i.e., in their own imperialist interests. French troops fought the British on the side of the American forces. What we have here is a national liberation war in which imperialist rivalry is an auxiliary element, one that has no serious importance. This is the very opposite to what we see in the war of 1914-16 (the national element in the Austro-Serbian War is of no serious importance compared with the all-determining element of imperialist rivalry). It would be absurd, therefore, to apply the concept imperialism indiscriminately and conclude that national wars are "impossible".

A national liberation war, waged, for example, by an alliance of Persia, India and China against one or more of the imperialist powers, is both possible and probable, for it would follow from the national liberation movements in these countries. The transformation of such a war into an imperialist war between the present-day imperialist powers would depend upon very many concrete factors, the emergence of which it would be ridiculous to guarantee.

Third, even in Europe national wars in the imperialist epoch cannot be regarded as impossible. The "epoch of imperialism" made the present war an imperialist one and it inevitably engenders new imperialist wars (until the triumph of socialism). This "epoch" has made the policies of the present great powers thoroughly imperialist, but it by no means precludes national wars on the part of, say, small (annexed or nationally-oppressed) countries *against* the imperialist powers, just as it does not preclude large-scale national movements in Eastern Europe. Junius takes a very sober view of Austria, for example, giving due consideration not only to "economic" factors, but to the peculiar political factors. He notes "Austria's intrinsic lack of cohesion" and recognises that the "Hapsburg monarchy is not the political organisation of a bourgeois state, but only a loose syndicate of several cliques of social parasites", and that "the liquidation of Austria-Hungary is, from the historical standpoint, only the continuation of the disintegration of Turkey and, at the same time, a requirement of the historical process of development". Much the same applies to some of the Balkan countries and Russia. And if the "great" powers are altogether exhausted in the present war, or if the revolution in Russia triumphs, national wars and even victorious national wars, are quite possible. Practical intervention by the imperialist powers is *not* always feasible. That is one point. Another is that the superficial view that the war of a small state against a giant is hopeless should be countered by the observation that even a hopeless war is a war just the same. Besides, certain factors operating within the "giant" countries—the outbreak of revolution, for example—can turn a "hopeless" war into a very "hopeful" one.

We have dwelt in detail on the erroneous proposition that "national wars are no longer possible" not only be-

cause it is patently erroneous from the theoretical point of view—it would certainly be very lamentable if the "Left" were to reveal a light-hearted attitude to Marxist theory at a time when the establishment of the Third International is possible only on the basis of unvulgarised Marxism. But the mistake is very harmful also from the standpoint of practical politics, for it gives rise to the absurd propaganda of "disarmament", since it is alleged that there can be no wars except reactionary wars. It also gives rise to the even more ludicrous and downright reactionary attitude of indifference to national movements. And such an attitude becomes chauvinism when members of the "great" European nations, that is, the nations which oppress the mass of small and colonial peoples, declare with a pseudo-scientific air: "national wars are no longer possible"! National wars *against* the imperialist powers are not only possible and probable; they are inevitable, *progressive and revolutionary, though* of course, to be *successful*, they require either the concerted effort of huge numbers of people in the oppressed countries (hundreds of millions in our example of India and China), or a *particularly* favourable conjuncture of international conditions (e.g., the fact that the imperialist powers cannot interfere, being paralysed by exhaustion, by war, by their antagonism, etc.), or the *simultaneous* uprising of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in one of the big powers (this latter eventuality holds first place as the most desirable and favourable for the victory of the proletariat).

It would be unfair, however, to accuse Junius of indifference to national movements. At any rate, he remarks that among the sins of the Social-Democratic parliamentary group was its silence on the death sentence passed on a native leader in the Cameroons on charges of "treason" (evidently he attempted to organise an uprising against the war). Elsewhere Junius especially emphasises (for the benefit of the Legiens, Lensches and the other scoundrels who are still listed as "Social-Democrats") that colonial peoples must be regarded as nations along with all the others. Junius clearly and explicitly states: "Socialism recognised the right of every nation to independence and freedom, to independent mastery of its destinies"; "International socialism recognises the right of free, independent and equal

nations, but it is only socialism that can create such nations, and only it can realise the right of nations to self-determination. And this socialist slogan," Junius justly remarks, "serves, like all other socialist slogans, not to justify the existing order of things, but to indicate the way forward, and to stimulate the proletariat in its active revolutionary policy of transformation" (pp. 77-78). It would be a grave mistake indeed to believe that all the German Left Social-Democrats have succumbed to the narrow-mindedness and caricature of Marxism now espoused by certain Dutch and Polish Social-Democrats who deny the right of nations to self-determination even under socialism. But the *specific*, Dutch-Polish, roots of *this* mistake we shall discuss elsewhere.

Another fallacious argument is advanced by Junius on the question of defence of the fatherland. This is a cardinal political question during an imperialist war. Junius has strengthened us in our conviction that our Party has indicated the only correct approach to this question; the proletariat is opposed to defence of the fatherland in this imperialist war *because* of its predatory, slave-owning, reactionary character, *because* it is possible and necessary to oppose to it (and to strive to convert it into) civil war for socialism. Junius, however, while brilliantly exposing the imperialist character of the present war as distinct from a national war, makes the very strange mistake of trying to drag a national programme into the *present*, non-national, war. It sounds almost incredible, but there it is.

The official Social-Democrats, both of the Legien and of the Kautsky stripe, in their servility to the bourgeoisie (who have been making the most noise about foreign "invasion" in order to deceive the mass of the people as to the imperialist character of the war), have been particularly assiduous in repeating this "invasion" argument. Kautsky, who now assures naïve and credulous people (incidentally, through Spectator, a member of the Russian Organising Committee<sup>83</sup>) that he joined the opposition at the end of 1914, continues to use this "argument"! To refute it, Junius quotes extremely instructive examples from history, which prove that "invasion and class struggle are not contradictory in bourgeois history, as official legend has it, but that one is the means and the expression of the other". For example, the Bourbons in France invoked for-

eign invaders against the Jacobins; the bourgeoisie in 1871 invoked foreign invaders against the Commune. In his *Civil War in France*, Marx wrote:

"The highest heroic effort of which old society is still capable is national war; and this is now proved to be a mere governmental humbug, intended to defer the struggle of classes, and to be thrown aside as soon as that class struggle bursts out into civil war."<sup>84</sup>

"The classical example for all times," says Junius, referring to 1793, "is the Great French Revolution." From all this, he draws the following conclusion: "The century of experience thus proves that it is not a state of siege, but relentless class struggle, which rouses the self-respect, the heroism and the moral strength of the mass of the people, and serves as the country's best protection and defence against the external enemy".

Junius's practical conclusion is this:

"Yes, it is the duty of the Social-Democrats to defend their country during a great historical crisis. But the grave guilt that rests upon the Social-Democratic Reichstag group consists in their having given the lie to their own solemn declaration, made on August 4, 1914, 'In the hour of danger we will not leave our fatherland unprotected.' They *did* leave the fatherland unprotected in the hour of its greatest peril. For their first duty to the fatherland in that hour was to show the fatherland what was really behind the present imperialist war; to sweep away the web of patriotic and diplomatic lies covering up this encroachment on the fatherland; to proclaim loudly and clearly that both victory and defeat in the present war are equally fatal for the German people; to resist to the last the throttling of the fatherland due to the state of siege; to proclaim the necessity of immediately arming the people and of allowing the people to decide the question of war and peace; resolutely to demand a permanent session of the people's representatives for the whole duration of the war in order to guarantee vigilant control over the government by the people's representatives, and control over the people's representatives by the people; to demand the immediate abolition of all restrictions on political rights, for only a free people can successfully defend its country; and finally, to oppose the imperialist war programme, which is to preserve Austria and Turkey, i.e., perpetuate reaction in Europe and in Germany, with the old, truly national programme of the patriots and democrats of 1848, the programme of Marx, Engels and Lassalle—the slogan of a united, Great German Republic. This is the banner that should have been unfurled before the country, which would have been a truly national banner of liberation, which would have been in accord with the best traditions of Germany and with the international class policy of the proletariat.... Hence, the grave dilemma—the interests of the fatherland or the international solidarity of the proletariat—the tragic conflict which prompted our parliamentarians to side, 'with a heavy heart', with the imperialist war, is purely imaginary, it is a bourgeois nationalist fiction. On the contrary, there is complete harmony between the interests of the country and the class interests of the proletarian International, both in time of war and in time of peace; both war and peace demand the most energetic development of the class struggle, the most determined fight for the Social-Democratic programme."

This is how Junius argues. The fallacy of his argument is strikingly evident, and since the tacit and avowed lackeys of

tsarism, Plekhanov and Chkhenskeli, and perhaps even Martov and Chkheidze, may gloatingly seize upon Junius's words, not for the purpose of establishing theoretical truth, but for the purpose of wriggling, covering up their tracks and throwing dust into the eyes of the workers, we must in greater detail elucidate the *theoretical* source of Junius's error.

He suggests that the imperialist war should be "opposed" with a national programme. He urges the advanced class to turn its face to the past and not to the future! In France, in Germany, and in the whole of Europe it was a *bourgeois* democratic revolution that, *objectively*, was on the order of the day in 1793 and 1848. Corresponding to this *objective* historical situation was the "truly national", i.e., the national *bourgeois* programme of the then existing democracy; in 1793 this programme was carried out by the most revolutionary elements of the bourgeoisie and the plebeians and in 1848 it was proclaimed by Marx in the name of the whole of progressive democracy. *Objectively*, the feudal and dynastic wars were then opposed by revolutionary-democratic wars, by wars for national liberation. This was the content of the historical tasks of that epoch.

At the present time, the *objective* situation in the biggest advanced states of Europe is different. Progress, if we leave out for the moment the possibility of temporary steps backward, can be made only in the direction of *socialist* society, only in the direction of the *socialist* revolution. From the standpoint of progress, from the standpoint of the progressive class, the imperialist bourgeois war, the war of highly developed capitalism, can, *objectively*, be opposed only with a war *against* the bourgeoisie, i.e., primarily civil war for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; for *unless* such a war is waged, serious progress is *impossible*; this may be followed—only under certain special conditions—by a war to defend the socialist state against bourgeois states. That is why the Bolsheviks (fortunately, very few, and quickly handed over by us to the *Prizyv* group<sup>85</sup>) who were ready to adopt the point of view of conditional defence, i.e., defence of the fatherland on condition that there was a victorious revolution and the victory of a republic in Russia,

were true to the *letter* of Bolshevism, but betrayed its *spirit*; for being drawn into the imperialist war of the leading European powers, Russia would *also* be waging an imperialist war, even under a republican form of government!

In saying that the class struggle is the best means of defence against invasion, Junius applies Marxist dialectics only half way, taking one step on the right road and immediately deviating from it. Marxist dialectics call for a concrete analysis of each specific historical situation. It is true that class struggle is the best means of defence against invasion *both* when the bourgeoisie is overthrowing feudalism, *and* when the proletariat is overthrowing the bourgeoisie. Precisely because it is true with regard to *every* form of class oppression, it is *too general*, and therefore, *inadequate* in the present *specific* case. Civil war against the bourgeoisie is *also* a form of class struggle, and only this form of class struggle would have saved Europe (the whole of Europe, not only one country) from the peril of invasion. The "Great German Republic", had it existed in 1914-16, would *also* have waged an *imperialist* war.

Junius came very close to the correct solution of the problem and to the correct slogan: civil war against the bourgeoisie for socialism; but, as if afraid to speak the whole truth, he turned *back*, to the fantasy of a "national war" in 1914, 1915 and 1916. If we examine the question not from the theoretical angle but from the purely practical one, Junius's error remains just as evident. The whole of bourgeois society, all classes in Germany, including the peasantry, were *in favour* of war (in all probability *the same* was the case in Russia—at least a majority of the well-to-do and middle peasantry and a very considerable portion of the poor peasants were evidently under the spell of bourgeois imperialism). The bourgeoisie was armed to the teeth. Under such circumstances to "proclaim" the programme of a republic, a permanent parliament, election of officers by the people (the "armed nation"), etc., would have meant, *in practice*, "*proclaiming*" a *revolution* (with the *wrong* revolutionary programme!).

In the same breath Junius quite rightly says that a revolution cannot be "made". Revolution was on the order of



the day in the 1914-16 period, it was hidden in the depths of the war, was *emerging* out of the war. This should have been "*proclaimed*" in the name of the revolutionary class, and *its* programme should have been fearlessly and fully announced: socialism is impossible in time of war without civil war against the arch-reactionary, criminal bourgeoisie, which condemns the people to untold disaster. Systematic, consistent, practical measures should have been planned, which *could be carried out no matter at what* pace the revolutionary crisis might develop, and which would be in line with the maturing revolution. These measures are indicated in our Party's resolution: (1) voting against war credits; (2) violation of the "class truce"; (3) creation of an illegal organisation; (4) fraternisation among the soldiers; (5) support for all the revolutionary actions of the masses. The success of *all* these steps *inevitably* leads to civil war.

The promulgation of a great historical programme was undoubtedly of tremendous significance; not the old national German programme, which became obsolete in 1914, 1915 and 1916, but the proletarian internationalist and socialist programme. "You, the bourgeoisie, are fighting for plunder; we, the workers of *all* the belligerent countries, declare war upon you, for socialism"—that's the sort of speech that should have been delivered in the parliaments on August 4, 1914, by socialists who had not betrayed the proletariat, as the Legiens, Davids, Kautskys, Plekhanovs, Guesdes, Sembats, etc., had done.

Evidently Junius's error is due to two kinds of mistakes in reasoning. There is no doubt that Junius is decidedly opposed to the imperialist war and is decidedly *in favour* of revolutionary tactics; and all the gloating of the Plekhanovs over Junius's "defencism" cannot wipe out this *fact*. Possible and probable calumnies of this kind must be answered promptly and bluntly.

But, first, Junius has not completely rid himself of the "environment" of the German Social-Democrats, even the Leftists, who are afraid of a split, who are afraid to follow revolutionary slogans to their logical conclusions.\*

\* We find the same error in Junius's arguments about which is better, victory or defeat? His conclusion is that both are equally bad (ruin, growth of armaments, etc.). This is the point of view not

This is a false fear, and the Left Social-Democrats of Germany must and *will* rid themselves of it. They *are sure to do so* in the course of their struggle against the social-chauvinists. The fact is that they are fighting against *their own* social-chauvinists resolutely, firmly and *sincerely*, and this is the tremendous, the fundamental difference in principle between them and the Martovs and Chkheidzes, who, with one hand (*à la* Skobelev) unfurl a banner bearing the greeting, "To the Liebknechts of All Countries", and with the other hand tenderly embrace Chkhenkeli and Potresov!

Secondly, Junius apparently wanted to achieve something in the nature of the Menshevik "theory of stages", of sad memory; he wanted to *begin* to carry out the revolutionary programme from the end that is "more suitable", "more popular" and more acceptable to the *petty bourgeoisie*. It is something like a plan "to outwit history", to outwit the philistines. He seems to say, surely, nobody would oppose a *better* way of defending the real fatherland; and the real fatherland is the Great German Republic, and the best defence *is* a militia, a permanent parliament, etc. Once it was accepted, that programme would automatically lead to the next stage—to the socialist revolution.

Probably, it was reasoning of this kind that consciously or semi-consciously determined Junius's tactics. Needless to say, such reasoning is fallacious. Junius's pamphlet conjures up in our mind the picture of a *lone* man who has no comrades in an illegal organisation accustomed to thinking out revolutionary slogans to their conclusion and systematically educating the masses in their spirit. But this shortcoming—it would be a grave error to forget this—is not Junius's personal failing, but the result of the weakness of *all* the German Leftists, who have become entangled in the vile net

of the revolutionary proletariat, but of the pacifist petty bourgeoisie. If one speaks about the "revolutionary intervention" of the proletariat—of this both Junius and the theses of the *Internationale* group speak, although unfortunately in terms that are too general—one *must* raise question from *another* point of view, namely: (1) Is "revolutionary intervention" possible without the risk of defeat? (2) Is it possible to scourge the bourgeoisie and the government of one's *own* country without taking that risk? (3) Have we not always asserted, and does not the historical experience of reactionary wars prove, that defeats help the cause of the revolutionary class?



of Kautskyite hypocrisy, pedantry and "friendliness" for the opportunists. Junius's adherents have managed, *in spite* of their isolation, to *begin* the publication of illegal leaflets and to start the war against Kautskyism. They will succeed in going further along the right road.

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## A CARICATURE OF MARXISM AND IMPERIALIST ECONOMISM<sup>86</sup>

"No one can discredit revolutionary Social-Democracy as long as it does not discredit itself." That maxim always comes to mind, and must always be borne in mind, when any major theoretical or tactical proposition of Marxism is victorious, or even placed on the order of the day, and when, *besides* outright and resolute opponents, it is assailed by friends who hopelessly discredit and disparage it and turn it into a caricature. That has happened time and again in the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement. In the early nineties, the victory of Marxism in the revolutionary movement was attended by the emergence of a caricature of Marxism in the shape of Economism,<sup>87</sup> or "strikeism". The Iskristis would not have been able to uphold the fundamentals of proletarian theory and policy, either against petty-bourgeois Narodism or bourgeois liberalism, without long years of struggle against Economism. It was the same with Bolshevism, which triumphed in the mass labour movement in 1905 due, among other things, to correct application of the boycott of the tsarist Duma<sup>88</sup> slogan in the autumn of 1905, when the key battles of the Russian revolution were being fought. Bolshevism had to face—and overcome by struggle—another caricature in 1908-10, when Alexinsky and others noisily opposed participation in the Third Duma.<sup>89</sup>

It is the same today too. Recognition of the *present* war as imperialist and emphasis on *its* close connection with the imperialist era of capitalism encounters not only resolute opponents, but also irresolute friends, for whom the word "imperialism" has become all the rage. Having *memorised* the word, they are offering the workers hopelessly confused theories and reviving many of the old mistakes of the old Economism. Capitalism has triumphed—*therefore* there is no need to bother with political problems, the old Economists reasoned in 1894-1901, falling

into rejection of the political struggle in Russia. Imperialism has triumphed—*therefore* there is no need to bother with the problems of political democracy, reason the present-day imperialist Economists. Kievsky's article, printed above, merits attention as a sample of these sentiments, as one such caricature of Marxism, as the first attempt to provide anything like an integral literary exposition of the vacillation that has been apparent in certain circles of our Party abroad since early 1915.

If imperialist Economism were to spread among the Marxists, who in the present great crisis of socialism have resolutely come out against social-chauvinism and for revolutionary internationalism, that would be a very grave blow to our trend—and to our Party. For it would discredit it from within, from its own ranks, would make it a vehicle of caricatured Marxism. It is therefore necessary to thoroughly discuss at least the most important of Kievsky's numerous errors, regardless of how "uninteresting" this may be, and regardless of the fact, also, that all too often we shall have to tediously explain elementary truths which the thoughtful and attentive reader has learned and understood long since from our literature of 1914 and 1915.

We shall begin with the "central" point of Kievsky's disquisitions in order to immediately bring to the reader the very "substance" of this new trend of imperialist Economism.

### 1. THE MARXIST ATTITUDE TOWARDS WAR AND "DEFENCE OF THE FATHERLAND"

Kievsky is convinced, and wants to convince his reader, that he "disagrees" *only* with § 9 of our Party Programme dealing with national self-determination. He is very angry and tries to refute the charge that on the question of democracy he is departing from the fundamentals of Marxism *in general*, that he has "betrayed" (the angry quotation marks are Kievsky's) Marxism on basic issues. But the point is that the moment our author begins to discuss his allegedly partial disagreement on an individual issue, the moment he adduces his arguments, considerations,

etc., he immediately reveals that he is deviating from Marxism all along the line. Take §b (Section 2) of his article. "This demand [i.e., national self-determination] directly [!] leads to social-patriotism," our author proclaims, explaining that the "treasonous" slogan of fatherland defence follows "quite [!] logically [!] from the right of nations to self-determination"... In his opinion, self-determination implies "sanctioning the treason of the French and Belgian social-patriots, who are defending this independence [the national independence of France and Belgium] with arms in hand! They are *doing* what the supporters of 'self-determination' only advocate..." "Defence of the fatherland belongs to the arsenal of our worst enemies..." "We categorically refuse to understand how one can *simultaneously* be against defence of the fatherland and for self-determination, against the fatherland and for it."

That's Kievsky. He obviously has not understood our resolutions against the fatherland defence slogan in the present war. It is therefore necessary again to explain the meaning of what is so clearly set out in our resolutions.

The resolution our Party adopted at its Berne Conference in March 1915, "On the Defence of the Fatherland Slogan", begins with the words: "*The present war is, in substance...*"

That the resolution deals with the *present* war could not have been put more plainly. The words "in substance" indicate that we must distinguish between the apparent and the real, between appearance and substance, between the word and the deed. The purpose of all talk about defence of the fatherland in this war is mendaciously to present as national the imperialist war of 1914-16, waged for the division of colonies, the plunder of foreign lands, etc. And to obviate even the slightest possibility of distorting our views, we added to the resolution a special paragraph on "*genuinely* national wars", which "took place *especially* [especially does not mean exclusively!] between 1789 and 1871".

The resolution explains that the "basic" of these "*genuinely*" national wars was a "long process of mass national movements, of a struggle against absolutism and

feudalism, the overthrow of national oppression..."\*

Clear, it would seem. The present imperialist war stems from the general conditions of the imperialist era and is not accidental, not an exception, not a deviation from the general and typical. Talk of defence of the fatherland is therefore a deception of the people, for this war is *not* a national war. In a *genuinely* national war the words "defence of the fatherland" are *not* a deception and *we are not opposed to it*. Such (genuinely national) wars took place "especially" in 1789-1871, and our resolution, while not denying by a single word that they are possible now too, explains how we should distinguish a genuinely national from an imperialist war covered by deceptive national slogans. Specifically, in order to distinguish the two we must examine whether the "basis" of the war is a "long process of mass national movements", the "overthrow of national oppression".

The resolution of "pacifism" expressly states: "Social-Democrats cannot overlook the positive significance of revolutionary wars, i.e., not imperialist wars, but such as were conducted, for instance [note: "for instance"], between 1789 and 1871 with the aim of doing away with national oppression..."\*\* Could our 1915 Party resolution speak of the national wars waged from 1789 to 1871 and say that we do not deny the positive significance of such wars if they were not considered possible today too? Certainly not.

A commentary, or popular explanation, of our Party resolutions is given in the Lenin and Zinoviev pamphlet *Socialism and War*. It plainly states, on page 5, that "socialists have regarded wars 'for the defence of the fatherland', or 'defensive' wars, as legitimate, progressive and just" *only* in the sense of "overthrowing alien oppression". It cites an example: Persia against Russia, "etc.", and says: "These would be just, and defensive wars, irrespective of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."\*\*\*

\* *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 162-63.—Ed.

\*\* *Ibid.*, pp. 162-63.—Ed.

\*\*\* *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 300-01.—Ed.

The pamphlet appeared in August 1915 and there are German and French translations. Kievsky is fully aware of its contents. And never, on no occasion, has he or anyone else challenged the resolution on the defence of the fatherland slogan, or the resolution on pacifism, or their interpretation in the pamphlet. Never, not once! We are therefore entitled to ask: are we slandering Kievsky when we say that he has absolutely failed to understand Marxism if, beginning with March 1915, he has not challenged our Party's views on the war, whereas now, in August 1916, in an article on self-determination, i.e., on a supposedly partial issue, he reveals an amazing lack of understanding of a *general* issue?

Kievsky says that the fatherland defence slogan is "treasonous". We can confidently assure him that *every* slogan is and always will be "treasonous" *for those* who mechanically repeat it without understanding its meaning, without giving it proper thought, *for those* who merely memorise the words without analysing their implications.

What, generally speaking, is "defence of the fatherland"? Is it a scientific concept relating to economics, politics, etc.? No. It is a much bandied about current expression, sometimes simply a philistine phrase, intended to *justify the war*. Nothing more. Absolutely nothing! The term "treasonous" can apply only in the sense that the philistine is capable of justifying *any* war by pleading "we are defending our fatherland", whereas Marxism, which does not degrade itself by stooping to the philistine's level, requires an historical analysis of each war in order to determine whether or not *that particular* war can be considered progressive, whether it serves the interests of democracy and the proletariat and, *in that sense*, is legitimate, just, etc.

The defence of the fatherland slogan is all too often unconscious philistine justification of war and reveals inability to analyse the meaning and implications of a particular war and see it in historical perspective.

Marxism makes that analysis and says: *if* the "substance" of a war is, *for example*, the overthrow of alien oppression (which was *especially* typical of Europe in 1789-1871), then such a war is progressive as far as the oppressed state or nation is concerned. *If*, however, the "substance" of a war is redivision of colonies, division of booty, plunder

of foreign lands (and such is the war of 1914-16), then all talk of defending the fatherland is "sheer deception of the people".

How, then, can we disclose and define the "substance" of a war? War is the continuation of policy. Consequently, we must examine the policy pursued prior to the war, the policy that led to and brought about the war. If it was an imperialist policy, i.e., one designed to safeguard the interests of finance capital and rob and oppress colonies and foreign countries, then the war stemming from that policy is imperialist. If it was a national liberation policy, i.e., one expressive of the mass movement against national oppression, then the war stemming from that policy is a war of national liberation.

The philistine does not realise that war is "the continuation of policy", and consequently limits himself to the formula that "the enemy has attacked us", "the enemy has invaded my country", without stopping to think *what issues* are at stake in the war, *which* classes are waging it, and with *what* political objects. Kievsky stoops right down to the level of such a philistine when he declares that Belgium has been occupied by the Germans, and hence, from the point of view of self-determination, the "Belgian social-patriots are right", or: the Germans have occupied part of France, hence, "Guesde can be satisfied", for "what is involved is territory populated by his nation" (and not by an alien nation).

For the philistine the important thing is *where* the armies stand, who is winning *at the moment*. For the Marxist the important thing is *what issues* are at stake in *this* war, during which first one, then the other army may be on top.

What is the present war being fought over? The answer is given in our resolution (based on the *policy* the belligerent powers pursued *for decades* prior to the war). England, France and Russia are fighting to keep the colonies they have seized, to be able to rob Turkey, etc. Germany is fighting to take over these colonies and to be able herself to rob Turkey, etc. Let us suppose even that the Germans take Paris or St. Petersburg. Would that change the nature of the present war? Not at all. The Germans' purpose—and more important, the policy that would bring

it to realisation if they were to win—is to seize the colonies, establish domination over Turkey, annex areas populated by other nations, for instance, Poland, etc. It is definitely not to bring the French or the Russians under foreign domination. The real nature of the present war is not national but imperialist. In other words, it is not being fought to enable one side to overthrow national oppression, which the other side is trying to maintain. It is a war between two groups of oppressors, between two freebooters over the division of their booty, over who shall rob Turkey and the colonies.

In short: a war *between* imperialist Great Powers (i.e., powers that oppress a whole number of nations and enmesh them in dependence on finance capital, etc.), or *in alliance* with the Great Powers, is an imperialist war. Such is the war of 1914-16. And in *this* war "defence of the fatherland" is a deception, an attempt to justify the war.

A war *against* imperialist, i.e., oppressing, powers by oppressed (for example, colonial) nations is a genuine national war. It is possible today too. "Defence of the fatherland" in a war waged by an oppressed nation against a foreign oppressor is not a deception. Socialists are *not* opposed to "defence of the fatherland" in *such* a war.

National self-determination is the same as the struggle for complete national liberation, for complete independence, against annexation, and socialists *cannot*—without ceasing to be socialists—reject *such* a struggle in whatever form, right down to an uprising or war.

Kievsky thinks he is arguing against Plekhanov: it was Plekhanov who pointed to the link between self-determination and defence of the fatherland! Kievsky *believed* Plekhanov that the link was *really* of the kind Plekhanov made it out to be. And having believed him, Kievsky took fright and decided that he must reject self-determination so as not to fall into Plekhanov's conclusions... There is great trust in Plekhanov, and great fright, but there is no trace of *thought* about the substance of Plekhanov's mistake!

The social-chauvinists plead self-determination in order to present this war as a national war. There is only one correct way of combating them: we must show that the war is being fought not to liberate nations, but to determine which of the great robbers will oppress *more* nations.

To fall into negation of wars *really* waged for liberating nations is to present the worst possible caricature of Marxism. Plekhanov and the French social-chauvinists harp on the republic in France in order to justify its "defence" against the German monarchy. If we were to follow Kievsky's line of reasoning, we would have to oppose either the republic or a war *really* fought to preserve the republic!! The German social-chauvinists point to universal suffrage and compulsory primary education in their country to justify its "defence" against tsarism. If we were to follow Kievsky's line of reasoning, we would have to oppose either universal suffrage and compulsory primary education or a war *really* fought to safeguard political freedom against attempts to abolish it!

Up to the 1914-16 war Karl Kautsky was a Marxist, and many of his major writings and statements will always remain models of Marxism. On August 26, 1910, he wrote in *Die Neue Zeit*, in reference to the imminent war:

"In a war between Germany and England the issue is not democracy, but world domination, i.e., exploitation of the world. That is not an issue on which Social-Democrats can side with the exploiters of their nation" (*Neue Zeit*, 28. Jahrg., Bd. 2, S. 776).

There you have an excellent Marxist formulation, one that fully coincides with our own and fully exposes the *present-day* Kautsky, who has turned from Marxism to defence of social-chauvinism. It is a formulation (we shall have occasion to revert to it in other articles) that clearly brings out the principles underlying the Marxist attitude towards war. War is the continuation of policy. Hence, once there is a struggle for democracy, a war for democracy is *possible*. National self-determination is but one of the democratic demands and does not, in principle, differ from other democratic demands. "World domination" is, to put it briefly, the substance of imperialist policy, of which imperialist war is the continuation. Rejection of "defence of the fatherland" in a democratic war, i.e., rejecting participation in such a war, is an absurdity that has nothing in common with Marxism. To embellish imperialist war by applying to it the concept of "defence of the fatherland", i.e., by presenting it as

a democratic war, is to deceive the workers and side with the reactionary bourgeoisie.

## 2. "OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEW ERA"

The heading is Kievsky's. He constantly speaks of a "new era", but here, too, unfortunately his arguments are erroneous.

Our Party resolutions speak of the present war as stemming from the general conditions of the imperialist era. We give a correct Marxist definition of the relation between the "era" and the "present war": Marxism requires a concrete assessment of each separate war. To understand why an imperialist war, i.e., a war thoroughly reactionary and anti-democratic in its political implications, could, and inevitably did, break out between the Great Powers, many of whom stood at the head of the struggle for democracy in 1789-1871—to understand this we must understand the general conditions of the imperialist era, i.e., the transformation of capitalism in the advanced countries into imperialism.

Kievsky has flagrantly distorted the relation between the "era" and the "present war". In his reasoning, to consider the matter *concretely* means to examine the "era". That is precisely where he is wrong.

The era 1789-1871 was of special significance for Europe. That is irrefutable. We cannot understand a single national liberation war, and such wars were especially typical of that period, unless we understand the general conditions of the period. Does that mean that *all* wars of that period were national liberation wars? Certainly not. To hold that view is to reduce the whole thing to an absurdity and apply a ridiculous stereotype in place of a concrete analysis of each separate war. There were also colonial wars in 1789-1871, and wars between reactionary empires that oppressed many nations.

Advanced European (and American) capitalism has entered a new era of imperialism. Does it follow from that that only imperialist wars are now possible? Any such contention would be absurd. It would reveal inability to distinguish a given concrete phenomenon from the sum total

of variegated phenomena possible in a given era. An era is called an era precisely because it encompasses the sum total of variegated phenomena and wars, typical and untypical, big and small, some peculiar to advanced countries, others to backward countries. To brush aside these concrete questions by resorting to general phrases about the "era", as Kievsky does, is to abuse the very concept "era". And to prove that, we shall cite one example out of many. But first it should be noted that one group of Lefts, namely, the German *Internationale* group, has advanced this manifestly erroneous proposition in §5 of its theses, published in No. 3 of the *Bulletin of the Berne Executive Committee* (February 29, 1916): "National wars are no longer possible in the era of this unbridled imperialism." We analysed that statement in *Sbornik "Sotsial-Demokrata"*.<sup>\*</sup> Here we need merely note that though everyone who has followed the internationalist movement is long acquainted with this theoretical proposition (we opposed it way back in the spring of 1916 at the extended meeting of the Berne Executive Committee), not a single group has repeated or accepted it. And there is not a single word in the spirit of this or any similar proposition in Kievsky's article, written in August 1916.

That should be noted, and for the following reason: if this or a similar theoretical proposition were advanced, then we could speak of theoretical divergencies. But since no such proposition has been advanced, we are constrained to say: what we have is not a different interpretation of the concept "era", not a theoretical divergency, but merely a carelessly uttered phrase, merely abuse of the word "era".

Here is an example. Kievsky starts his article by asking: "Is not this [self-determination] the same as the right to receive free of charge 10,000 acres of land on Mars? The question can be answered only in the most concrete manner, only in context with the nature of the present era. The right of nations to self-determination is one thing in the era of the formation of national states, as the best form of developing the productive forces at their then existing level, but it is quite another thing now that this form, the national state, fetters the development of the productive forces. A vast distance separates the era of the establishment of capitalism and the national state from the era of the collapse of the national state and the eve of the collapse of capitalism itself. To discuss things in 'general', out of context with time and space, does not benefit a Marxist."

<sup>\*</sup> See pp. 167-72 of this book.—Ed.

There you have a sample of caricaturing the concept "imperialist era". And its caricature must be fought precisely because it is a new and important concept! What do we mean when we say that national states have become fetters, etc.? We have in mind the advanced capitalist countries, above all Germany, France, England, whose participation in the present war has been the chief factor in making it an imperialist war. In *these* countries, which hitherto have been in the van of mankind, particularly in 1789-1871, the process of forming national states has been consummated. In *these* countries the national movement is a thing of an irrevocable past, and it would be an absurd reactionary utopia to try to revive it. The national movement of the French, English, Germans has long been completed. In *these* countries history's next step is a different one: liberated nations have become transformed into oppressor nations, into nations of imperialist rapine, nations that are going through the "eve of the collapse of capitalism".

But what of other nations?

Kievsky repeats, like a rule learned by rote, that Marxists should approach things "concretely", but he does *not* apply that rule. In our theses, on the other hand, we deliberately gave an example of a concrete approach, and Kievsky did not wish to point out our mistake, if he found one.

Our theses (§6) state that to be concrete not less than *three* different types of countries must be distinguished when dealing with self-determination. (It was clearly impossible to discuss each separate country in general theses). First type: the advanced countries of Western Europe (and America), where the national movement is a thing of the *past*. Second type: Eastern Europe, where it is a thing of the *present*. Third type: semi-colonies and colonies, where it is largely a thing of the *future*.

Is this correct or not? *This* is what Kievsky should have levelled his criticism at. But he does not see the *essence* of the theoretical problems! He fails to see that unless he refutes the above-mentioned proposition (in §6) of our theses — and it cannot be refuted because it is correct — his disquisitions about the "era" resemble a man brandishing his sword but striking no blows.

"In contrast to V. Ilyin's opinion," he writes at the end of his article, "we assume that for the majority [!] of Western [!] countries the national problem has not been settled..."

And so, the national movements of the French, Spaniards, English, Dutch, Germans and Italians were not consummated in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and earlier? At the beginning of the article the concept "era of imperialism" is distorted to make it appear that the national movement has been consummated in general, and not only in the advanced Western countries. At the end of the same article the "national problem" is declared "not settled" in *precisely* the Western countries! Is that not a muddle?

In the Western countries national movement is a thing of the distant past. In England, France, Germany, etc., the "fatherland" is a dead letter, it has played its historical role, *i.e.*, the national movement cannot yield here anything progressive, anything that will elevate new masses to a new economic and political life. History's next step here is not transition from feudalism or from patriarchal savagery to national progress, to a cultured and politically free fatherland, but transition from a "fatherland" that has outlived its day, that is capitalistically overripe, to socialism.

The position is different in Eastern Europe. As far as the Ukrainians and Byelorussians, for instance, are concerned, only a Martian dreamer could deny that the national movement has not yet been consummated there, that the awakening of the masses to the full use of their mother tongue and literature (and this is an absolute condition and concomitant of the full development of capitalism, of the full penetration of exchange to the very last peasant family) is *still* going on there. The "fatherland" is historically not *yet* quite a dead letter there. There the "defence of the fatherland" can *still* be defence of democracy, of one's native language, of political liberty against oppressor nations, against medievalism, whereas the English, French, Germans and Italians lie when they speak of defending their fatherland in the present war, because actually what they are defending is *not* their native language, *not* their right to national development, but their rights as slave-holders, their colonies, the foreign "spheres

of influence" of their finance capital, etc.

In the semi-colonies and colonies the national movement is, historically, still younger than in Eastern Europe.

What do the words "advanced countries" and imperialist era refer to? In *what* lies the "special" position of Russia (heading of §e in the second chapter of Kievsky's article), and not only Russia? *Where* is the national liberation movement a false phrase and *where* is it a living and progressive reality? Kievsky reveals no understanding on any of these points.

### 3. WHAT IS ECONOMIC ANALYSIS?

Central to all the disquisitions of the self-determination opponents is the claim that it is generally "unachievable" under capitalism or imperialism. The word "unachievable" is frequently used in widely different and inaccurately defined meanings. That is why in our theses we insisted on what is essential in any theoretical discussion: an explanation of what is meant by "unachievable". Nor did we confine ourselves to that. We tried to give such an explanation. *All* democratic demands are "unachievable" under imperialism in the sense that politically they are hard to achieve or totally unachievable without a series of revolutions.

It is fundamentally wrong, however, to maintain that self-determination is unachievable in the economic sense.

That has been our contention. It is the pivotal point of our theoretical differences, a question to which our opponents in any serious discussion should have paid due attention.

But just see how Kievsky treats the question.

He definitely rejects unachievable as meaning "hard to achieve" politically. He gives a direct answer in the sense of economic unachievability.

"Does this mean," Kievsky writes, "that self-determination under imperialism is just as unachievable as labour money under commodity production?" And he replies: "Yes, it means exactly that. For what we are discussing is the logical contradiction between two social categories: 'imperialism' and 'self-determination of nations', the same logical contradictions as that between two other categories: labour money and commodity production. Imperialism is the negation of self-determination, and no magician can reconcile the two".



Frightening as is the angry word "magician" Kievsky hurls at us, we must nevertheless point out that he simply fails to understand what economic analysis implies. There should be no "logical contradiction"—providing, of course, that there is proper logical thinking—either in an economic or political analysis. Hence, to plead a "logical contradiction" in general when what we are discussing is economic and not political analysis, is completely irrelevant. Both economic and political phenomena come within "social categories". Consequently, having first replied directly and definitely: "Yes, it means exactly that" (i.e., self-determination is just as unachievable as labour money under commodity production), Kievsky dismisses the whole matter by beating about the bush, without offering any economic analysis.

How do we prove that labour money is unachievable under commodity production? By economic analysis. And economic analysis, like every other, rules out "logical contradictions", takes economic and only economic categories (and not "social categories" in general) and from them concludes that labour money is unachievable. In the first chapter of *Capital* there is no mention whatever of politics, or political forms, or "social categories": the analysis applies only to economic phenomena, commodity exchange, its development. Economic analysis shows—needless to say, through "logical" arguments—that under commodity production labour money is unachievable.

Kievsky does not even attempt anything approximating an economic analysis! He *confuses* the economic substance of imperialism with its political tendencies, as is obvious from the very first phrase of the very first paragraph of his article. Here is that phrase:

"Industrial capital is the synthesis of pre-capitalist production and merchant-usurer capital. Usurer capital becomes the servant of industrial capital. Then capitalism subjects the various forms of capital and there emerges its highest, unified type—finance capital. The whole era can therefore be designated as the era of finance capital, of which imperialism is the corresponding foreign-policy system."

Economically, that definition is absolutely worthless: instead of precise economic categories we get mere phrases. However, it is impossible to dwell on that now. The important thing is that Kievsky proclaims imperialism to be a "foreign-policy system".

First, this is, essentially, a wrong repetition of Kautsky's wrong idea.

Second, it is a purely political, and only political, definition of imperialism. By defining imperialism as a "system of policy" Kievsky wants to avoid the economic analysis he promised to give when he declared that self-determination was "just as" unachievable, i.e., economically unachievable, under imperialism as labour money under commodity production! \*

In his controversy with the Lefts, Kautsky declared that imperialism was "merely a system of foreign policy" (namely, annexation), and that it would be wrong to describe as imperialism a definite economic stage, or level, in the development of capitalism.

Kautsky is wrong. Of course, it is not proper to argue about words. You cannot prohibit the use of the "word" imperialism in this sense or any other. But if you want to conduct a discussion you must define your terms precisely.

Economically, imperialism (or the "era" of finance capital—it is not a matter of words) is the highest stage in the development of capitalism, one in which production has assumed such big, immense proportions that *free competition gives way to monopoly*. That is the economic essence of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in trusts, syndicates, etc., in the omnipotence of the giant banks, in the buying up of raw material sources, etc., in the concentration of banking capital, etc. Everything hinges on economic monopoly.

The political superstructure of this new economy, of monopoly capitalism (imperialism is monopoly capitalism) is the change from democracy to political reaction. Democracy corresponds to free competition. Political reaction corresponds to monopoly. "Finance capital strives for

\* Is Kievsky aware of the impolite word Marx used in reference to such "logical methods"? Without applying this impolite term to Kievsky, we nevertheless are obliged to remark that Marx described such methods as "fraudulent": arbitrarily inserting precisely what is at issue, precisely what has to be proved, in defining a concept.

We repeat, we do not apply Marx's impolite expression to Kievsky. We merely disclose the source of his mistake. (In the manuscript this passage is crossed out.—Ed.)

domination, not freedom," Rudolf Hilferding rightly remarks in his *Finance Capital*.

It is fundamentally wrong, un-Marxist and unscientific, to single out "foreign policy" from policy in general, let alone counterpose foreign policy to home policy. Both in foreign and home policy imperialism strives towards violations of democracy, towards reaction. In this sense imperialism is indisputably the "negation" of *democracy in general*, of *all democracy*, and not just of *one* of its demands, national self-determination.

Being a "negation" of democracy in general, imperialism is *also* a "negation" of democracy in the national question (i.e., national self-determination): it seeks to violate democracy. The achievement of democracy is, in the same sense, and to the same degree, harder under imperialism (compared with pre-monopoly capitalism), as the achievement of a republic, a militia, popular election of officials, etc. There can be no talk of democracy being "economically" unachievable.

Kievsky was probably led astray here by the fact (besides his general lack of understanding of the requirements of economic analysis) that the philistine regards annexation (i.e., acquisition of foreign territories against the will of their people, i.e., violation of self-determination) as equivalent to the "spread" (expansion) of finance capital to a larger economic territory.

But theoretical problems should not be approached from philistine conceptions.

Economically, imperialism is monopoly capitalism. To acquire full monopoly, all competition must be eliminated, and not only on the home market (of the given state), but also on foreign markets, in the whole world. Is it *economically* possible, "in the era of finance capital", to eliminate competition even in a foreign state? Certainly it is. It is done through a rival's financial dependence and acquisition of his sources of raw materials and eventually of all his enterprises.

The American trusts are the supreme expression of the economics of imperialism or monopoly capitalism. They do not confine themselves to economic means of eliminating rivals, but constantly resort to political, even criminal, methods. It would be the greatest mistake, how-

ever, to believe that the trusts cannot establish their monopoly by purely economic methods. Reality provides ample proof that this is "achievable": the trusts undermine their rivals' credit through the banks (the owners of the trusts become the owners of the banks: buying up shares); their supply of materials (the owners of the trusts become the owners of the railways: buying up shares); for a certain time the trusts sell below cost, spending millions on this in order to ruin a competitor and then *buy up* his enterprises, his sources of raw materials (mines, land, etc.).

There you have a purely economic analysis of the power of the trusts and their expansion. There you have the purely economic path to expansion: *buying up* mills and factories, sources of raw materials.

Big finance capital of one country can always buy up competitors in another, politically independent country and constantly does so. Economically, this is fully achievable. Economic "annexation" is *fully* "achievable" without political annexation and is widely practised. In the literature on imperialism you will constantly come across indications that Argentina, for example, is in reality a "trade colony" of Britain, or that Portugal is in reality a "vassal" of Britain, etc. And that is actually so: economic dependence upon British banks, indebtedness to Britain, British acquisition of their railways, mines, land, etc., enable Britain to "annex" these countries economically without violating their political independence.

National self-determination means political independence. Imperialism seeks to violate such independence because political annexation often makes economic annexation easier, cheaper (easier to bribe officials, secure concessions, put through advantageous legislation, etc.), more convenient, less troublesome—just as imperialism seeks to replace democracy generally by oligarchy. But to speak of the *economic* "unachievability" of self-determination under imperialism is sheer nonsense.

Kievsky gets round the theoretical difficulties by a very simple and superficial dodge, known in German as "*burschikose*" phraseology, i.e., primitive, crude phrases heard (and quite naturally) at student binges. Here is an example:

"Universal suffrage," he writes, "the eight-hour day and even the republic are *logically* compatible with imperialism, though imperialism far from smiles [!] on them and their achievement is therefore extremely difficult."

We would have absolutely no objections to the *burschikose* statement that imperialism far from "smiles" on the republic—a frivolous word can sometimes lend colour to a scientific polemic!—if in this polemic on a serious issue we were given, *in addition*, an economic and political analysis of the concepts involved. With Kievsky, however, the *burschikose* phrase does duty for such an analysis or serves to conceal lack of it.

What can this mean: "Imperialism far from smiles on the republic"? And why?

The republic is one possible form of the political superstructure of capitalist society, and, moreover, under present-day conditions the most democratic form. To say that imperialism does not "smile" on the republic is to say that there is a contradiction between imperialism and democracy. It may very well be that Kievsky does not "smile" or even "far from smiles" on this conclusion. Nevertheless it is irrefutable.

To continue. What is the nature of this contradiction between imperialism and democracy? Is it a logical or illogical contradiction? Kievsky uses the word "logical" without stopping to think and therefore does not notice that in this particular case it serves to *conceal* (both from the reader's and author's eyes and mind) the *very question* he sets out to discuss! That question is the relation of economics to politics: the relation of economic conditions and the economic content of imperialism to a certain political form. To say that every "contradiction" revealed in human discussion is a logical contradiction is meaningless tautology. And with the aid of this tautology Kievsky evades the *substance* of the question: Is it a "logical" contradiction between two *economic* phenomena or propositions (1)? Or two *political* phenomena or propositions (2)? Or *economic* and *political* phenomena or propositions (3)?

For that is the heart of the matter, once we are discussing economic unachievability or achievability under one or another political form!

Had Kievsky not evaded the heart of the matter, he would probably have realised that the contradiction between imperialism and the republic is a contradiction between the economics of latter-day capitalism (namely, monopoly capitalism) and political democracy in general. For Kievsky will never prove that any major and fundamental democratic measure (popular election of officials or officers, complete freedom of association and assembly, etc.) is less contradictory to imperialism (or, if you like, more "smiled" upon) than the republic.

What we have, then, is the proposition *we* advanced in our theses: imperialism contradicts, "logically" contradicts, *all* political democracy *in general*. Kievsky does not "smile" on this proposition for it demolishes all his illogical constructions. But what can we do about it? Are we to accept a method that is supposed to refute certain propositions, but instead secretly advances them by using such expressions as "imperialism far from smiles on the republic"?

Further. Why does imperialism far from smile on the republic? And how does imperialism "combine" its economics with the republic?

Kievsky has given no thought to that. We would remind him of the following words of Engels in reference to the democratic republic. Can wealth dominate under this form of government? The question concerns the "contradiction" between economics and politics.

Engels replies: "The democratic republic officially knows nothing any more of property distinctions (between citizens). In it, wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely. On the one hand, in the form of the direct corruption of officials, of which America provides the classical example; on the other hand, in the form of an alliance between government and stock exchange..."<sup>90</sup>

There you have an excellent example of economic analysis on the question of the "achievability" of democracy under capitalism. And the "achievability" of self-determination under imperialism is part of that question.

The democratic republic "logically" contradicts capitalism, because "officially" it puts the rich and the poor on an equal footing. That is a contradiction between the economic system and the political superstructure. There is

the same contradiction between imperialism and the republic, deepened or aggravated by the fact that the change-over from free competition to monopoly makes the realisation of political freedoms even more "difficult".

How, then, is capitalism reconciled with democracy? By indirect implementation of the omnipotence of capital. There are two economic means for that: (1) direct bribery; (2) alliance of government and stock exchange. (That is stated in our theses—under a bourgeois system finance capital "can freely bribe and buy any government and any official".)

Once we have the dominance of commodity production, of the bourgeoisie, of the power of money—bribery (direct or through the stock exchange) is "achievable" under any form of government and under any kind of democracy.

What, it can be asked, is altered in this respect when capitalism gives way to imperialism, i.e., when pre-monopoly capitalism is replaced by monopoly capitalism?

Only that the power of the stock exchange increases. For finance capital is industrial capital at its highest, monopoly level which has merged with banking capital. The big banks merge with and absorb the stock exchange. (The literature on imperialism speaks of the declining role of the stock exchange, but only in the sense that every giant bank is itself virtually a stock exchange.)

Further. If "wealth" in general is fully capable of achieving domination over any democratic republic by bribery and through the stock exchange, then, how can Kievsky maintain, without lapsing into a very curious "logical contradiction", that the immense wealth of the trusts and the banks, which have thousands of millions at their command, cannot "achieve" the domination of finance capital over a foreign, i.e., politically independent, republic??

Well? Bribery of officials is "unachievable" in a foreign state? Or the "alliance of government and stock exchange" applies only to one's own government?

\* \* \*

The reader will already have seen that it requires roughly ten pages of print to untangle and popularly explain ten lines of confusion. We cannot examine every one of Kiev-

sky's arguments in the same detail. And there is not a single one that is not confused. Nor is there really any need for this once the main arguments have been examined. The rest will be dealt with briefly.

#### 4. THE EXAMPLE OF NORWAY

Norway "achieved" the supposedly unachievable right to self-determination in 1905, in the era of the most rampant imperialism. It is therefore not only absurd, but ludicrous, from the theoretical standpoint, to speak of "un-achievability".

Kievsky wants to refute that by angrily calling us "rationalists". (What has that to do with it? The rationalist confines himself to purely abstract disquisitions, while we have pointed to a very concrete fact! But perhaps Kievsky is using the foreign word "rationalist" in the same... how to put it more mildly? ... in the same "unhappy" manner he used the word "extractive" at the beginning of his article, when he presented his arguments "in extractive form"?)

Kievsky reproaches us. For us, he says, "the important thing is the appearance of phenomena rather than the real substance". Well, let us examine the real substance.

His refutation begins with this example: enactment of a law against trusts does not prove that their prohibition is unachievable. True enough. But the example is an unhappy one, for it militates *against* Kievsky. Laws are political measures, politics. No political measure can prohibit economic phenomena. Whatever political form Poland adopts, whether she be part of tsarist Russia or Germany, or an autonomous region, or a politically independent state, there is no prohibiting or repealing her dependence on the finance capital of the imperialist powers, or preventing that capital from buying up the shares of her industries.

The independence Norway "achieved" in 1905 was only political. It could not affect its economic dependence, nor was this the intention. That is exactly the point made in our theses. We indicated that self-determination concerns only politics, and it would therefore be wrong even to

raise the question of its economic unachievability. But here is Kievsky "refuting" this by citing an example of political bans being powerless against the economy! What a "refutation"!

To proceed.

"One or even many instances of small-scale industry prevailing over large-scale industry is not sufficient to refute Marx's correct proposition that the general development of capitalism is attended by the concentration and centralisation of production."

Again, the argument is based on an unfortunate *example*, chosen to divert the attention (of the reader and the author) from the substance of the issue.

We maintain that it would be wrong to speak of the economic unachievability of self-determination in the same sense as we speak of the unachievability of labour money under capitalism. Not a single "example" of *such* achievability can be cited. Kievsky tacitly admits we are correct on this point when he shifts to *another* interpretation of "unachievability".

Why does he not do so directly? Why does he not openly and precisely formulate *his* proposition: "self-determination, while unachievable in the sense that it is economically possible under capitalism, contradicts development and is therefore either reactionary or merely an exception"?

He does not do so because a clear formulation of this counter-proposition would immediately expose its author, and he therefore tries to conceal it.

The law of economic concentration, of the victory of large-scale production over small, is recognised in our own and the Erfurt programmes. Kievsky conceals the fact that nowhere is the law of political or state concentration recognised. If it were the same kind of law—if there were such a law—then why should not Kievsky formulate it and suggest that it be added to our programme? Is it right for him to leave us with a bad, incomplete programme, considering that he has discovered this new law of state concentration, which is of practical significance since it would rid our programme of erroneous conclusions?

Kievsky does not formulate that law, does not suggest that it be added to our programme, because he has the hazy feeling that if he did he would be making himself a laughing-stock. Everyone would laugh at this amusing imperialist Economism if it were expressed openly and if, parallel with the law that small-scale production is ousted by large-scale production, there were presented another "*law*" (connected with the first or existing side by side with it) of small states being ousted by big ones!

To explain this we shall put only one question to Kievsky: Why is it that economists (without quotation marks) do *not* speak of the "disintegration" of the modern trusts or big banks? Or of the possibility and achievability of such disintegration? Why is it that even the "imperialist Economist" (in quotation marks) is obliged to admit that the disintegration of big states is both possible and achievable, and not only in general, but, for example, the secession of "small nationalities" (please note! ) from Russia (§c, Chapter II of Kievsky's article)?

Lastly, to show even more clearly the lengths to which our author goes, and to warn him, let us note the following: We all accept the law of large-scale production ousting small-scale production, but no one is afraid to describe a specific "instance" of "small-scale industry prevailing over large-scale industry" as a reactionary phenomenon. *No* opponent of self-determination has yet ventured to describe as reactionary Norway's secession from Sweden, though we raised the question in our literature as early as 1914.

Large-scale production is unachievable if, for instance, hand-worked machines remain. The idea of a mechanical factory "disintegrating" into handicrafts production is utterly absurd. The imperialist tendency towards big empires is fully achievable, and in practice is often achieved, in the form of an imperialist alliance of sovereign and independent—politically independent—states. Such an alliance is possible and is encountered not only in the form of an economic merger of the finance capital of two countries, but also in the form of military "co-operation" in an imperialist war. National struggle, national insurrection, national secession are fully "achievable" and are met with in practice *under* imperialism. They are even more

pronounced, for imperialism does not halt the development of capitalism and the growth of democratic tendencies among the mass of the population. On the contrary, it *accentuates* the antagonism between their democratic aspirations and the anti-democratic tendency of the trusts.

It is only from the point of view of imperialist Economism, i.e., caricatured Marxism, that one can ignore, for instance, this specific aspect of imperialist policy: on the one hand, the present imperialist war offers examples of how the force of financial ties and economic interests draws a small, politically independent state into the struggle of the Great Powers (Britain and Portugal). On the other hand, the violation of democracy with regard to small nations, much weaker (both economically and politically) than their imperialist "patrons", leads either to revolt (Ireland) or to defection of whole regiments to the enemy (the Czechs). In this situation it is not only "achievable", from the point of view of finance capital, but *sometimes even profitable* for the trusts, for *their* imperialist policy, for *their* imperialist war, to allow *individual* small nations as much democratic freedom as they can, right down to political independence, so as not to risk damaging their "own" military operations. To overlook the peculiarity of political and strategic relationships and to repeat indiscriminately a word learned by rote, "imperialism", is anything but Marxism.

On Norway, Kievsky tells us, firstly, that she "had always been an independent state". That is not true and can only be explained by the author's *burschikose* carelessness and his disregard of political issues. Norway was *not* an independent state prior to 1905, though she enjoyed a very large measure of autonomy. Sweden recognised Norway's political independence only *after* her secession. If Norway "had always been an independent state", then the Swedish Government would not have informed the other powers, on October 26, 1905, that it recognised Norway's independence.

Secondly, Kievsky cites a number of statements to prove that Norway looked to the West, and Sweden to the East, that in one country mainly British, and in the other German, finance capital was "at work", etc. From this he

draws the triumphant conclusion: "This example (Norway) neatly fits into our pattern."

There you have a sample of the logic of imperialist Economism! Our theses point out that finance capital can dominate in "any", "even independent country", and all the arguments about self-determination being "unachievable" from the point of view of finance capital are therefore sheer confusion. We are given data *confirming* our proposition about the part foreign finance capital played in Norway *before* and *after* her secession. And these data are supposed to *refute* our proposition!

Dilating on finance capital in order to *disregard* political issues—is that the way to discuss politics?

No. Political issues do not disappear because of "Economism"'s faulty logic. British finance capital was "at work" in Norway before and after secession. German finance capital was "at work" in Poland prior to her secession from Russia and will continue to "work" there *no matter* what political status Poland enjoys. That is so elementary that it is embarrassing to have to repeat it. But what can one do if the ABC is forgotten?

Does this dispense with the political question of Norway's status? With her having been part of Sweden? With the attitude of the workers when the secession issue arose?

Kievsky evades these questions because they hit hard at the Economists. But these questions were posed, and are posed, by life itself. Life itself posed the question: Could a Swedish worker who did not recognise Norway's right to secession remain a member of the Social-Democratic Party? *He could not.*

The Swedish aristocrats wanted a war against Norway, and so did the clericals. That fact does not disappear because Kievsky has "forgotten" to read about it in the history of the Norwegian people. The Swedish worker could, while remaining a Social-Democrat, urge the Norwegians to vote against secession (the Norwegian referendum on secession, held on August 13, 1905, resulted in 368,200 votes for secession and 184 against, with about 80 per cent of the electorate taking part). But the Swedish worker who, like the Swedish aristocracy and bourgeoisie, would deny the Norwegians the right to decide this question themselves, without the Swedes and irrespective of their



will, would have been a *social-chauvinist* and a *miscreant* the *Social-Democratic Party* could not tolerate in its ranks.

That is how § 9 of our Party Programme should be applied. But our imperialist Economist tries to *jump over* this clause. You cannot jump over it, gentlemen, without falling into the embrace of chauvinism!

And what of the Norwegian worker? Was it his duty, from the internationalist point of view, to vote for secession? Certainly not. He could have voted against secession and remained a Social-Democrat. He would have been betraying his duty as a member of the Social-Democratic Party only if he had proffered a helping hand to a Black-Hundred Swedish worker opposed to Norway's *freedom* of secession.

Some people refuse to see this elementary difference in the position of the Norwegian and Swedish worker. But they expose themselves when they *evade* this most concrete of political questions, which we squarely put to them. They remain silent, try to wriggle out and in that way surrender their position.

To prove that the "Norwegian" issue can arise in Russia, we deliberately advanced this proposition: in circumstances of a *purely* military and strategic nature a separate Polish state is fully achievable even *now*. Kievsky wants to "discuss" that—and remains silent!

Let us add this: Finland too, out of *purely* military and strategic considerations, and given a certain outcome of the *present* imperialist war (for instance, Sweden joining the Germans and the latter's semi-victory), can become a separate state without undermining the "achievability" of even a single operation of finance capital, without making "unachievable" the buying up of Finnish railway and industrial shares.\*

\* Given one outcome of the present war, the formation of new states in Europe (Polish, Finnish, etc.) is fully "achievable" without in any way disturbing the conditions for the development of imperialism and its power. On the contrary, this would *increase* the influence, contacts and pressure of finance capital. But given another outcome, the formation of new states of Hungary, Czechia, etc., is *likewise* "achievable". The British imperialists are already planning this second outcome in anticipation of their victory. The imperialist era does not destroy either the striving for national political independence or its "achievability" *within the bounds* of world imperialist relation-

Kievsky seeks salvation from unpleasant political issues in an amazing phrase which is amazingly characteristic of all his "arguments": "At any moment... [that is literally what he says at the end of §c, Chapter I] the Sword of Damocles can strike and put an end to the existence of an 'independent' workshop" (a "hint" at little Sweden and Norway).

That, presumably, is genuine Marxism: a separate Norwegian state, whose secession from Sweden the *Swedish* Government described as a "revolutionary measure", has been in existence only some ten years. Is there any point in examining the *political* issues that follow from this if we have read Hilferding's *Finance Capital* and "understood" it in the sense that "at any moment"—if we are to exaggerate then let's go the whole hog!—a small state might vanish? Is there any point in drawing attention to the fact that we have perverted Marxism into Economism, and that we have turned our policy into a rehash of the speeches of case-hardened Russian chauvinists?

What a mistake the Russian workers must have made in 1905 in seeking a republic: finance capital had already been mobilised against it in France, England, etc., and "at any moment" the "Sword of Damocles" could have struck it down, if it had ever come into being!

\* \* \*

The demand for national self-determination is not... utopian in the minimum programme: it does not contradict social development, inasmuch as its achievement would not halt that development." That passage from Martov is challenged by Kievsky in the section in which he cites the "statements" about Norway. They *prove*, again and again, the generally known fact that Norway's "self-determination" and secession *did not halt either* the development of finance capital generally, *or* expan-

ships. *Outside* these bounds, however, a republican Russia, or in general any major democratic transformations anywhere else in the world are "unachievable" without a series of revolutions and are unstable without socialism. Kievsky has wholly and completely failed to understand the relation of imperialism to democracy.

sion of its operation in particular, or the buying up of Norway by the English!

There have been Bolsheviks among us, Alexinsky in 1908-10, for instance, who argued with Martov *precisely at a time* when Martov was right! God save us from such "allies"!

### 5. "MONISM AND DUALISM"

Reproaching us for "interpreting the demand dualistically" P. Kievsky writes:

"Monistic action of the International is replaced by dualistic propaganda."

That sounds quite Marxist and materialistic: monistic action is contrasted to "dualistic" propaganda. Unfortunately, closer examination reveals that it is *verbal* "monism", like the "monism" of Dühring. "If I include a shoe brush in the *unity* mammals," Engels wrote exposing Dühring's "monism", "this does not help it to get mammary glands."<sup>91</sup>

This means that only such things, qualities, phenomena and actions that are *a unity* in objective reality can be declared "a unity". It is this "*detail*" that our author overlooks!

He thinks we are "dualists", first, because what we demand, primarily, of the workers of the oppressed nations—this refers to the national question only—differs from what we demand of the workers of the oppressor nations.

To determine whether P. Kievsky's "monism" is the same as Dühring's, let us examine *objective realities*.

Is the *actual* condition of the workers in the oppressor and in the oppressed nations the same, from the standpoint of the national question?

No, it is not the same.

(1) *Economically*, the difference is that sections of the working class in the oppressor nations receive crumbs from the *superprofits* the bourgeoisie of these nations obtains by extra exploitation of the workers of the oppressed nations. Besides, economic statistics show that here a *larger* percentage of the workers become "straw bosses" than is

the case in the oppressed nations, a *larger* percentage rise to the labour aristocracy.\* That is a fact. To a *certain degree* the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of *their own* bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations.

(2) *Politically*, the difference is that, compared with the workers of the oppressed nations, they occupy a *privileged* position in many spheres of political life.

(3) *Ideologically*, or spiritually, the difference is that they are taught, at school and in life, to disdain and contempt for the workers of the oppressed nations. This has been *experienced*, for example, by every Great Russian who has been brought up or who has lived among Great Russians.

Thus, *all along the line* there are differences in objective reality, i.e., "dualism" in the objective world that is independent of the will and consciousness of individuals.

That being so, how are we to regard P. Kievsky's assertion about the "monistic action of the International"?

It is a hollow, high-sounding phrase, no more.

In *real life* the International is composed of workers *divided* into oppressor and oppressed nations. *If* its action is to be *monistic*, its propaganda must *not* be the same for both. That is how we should regard the matter in the light of real (not Dühringian) "monism", Marxist materialism.

An example? We cited the example of Norway (in the legal press over two years ago!), and no one has challenged it. In this concrete case taken from life, the *action* of the Norwegian and Swedish workers was "monistic", unified, internationalist *only* because and insofar as the Swedish workers *unconditionally* championed Norway's freedom to secede, while the Norwegian workers raised the question of secession *only conditionally*. Had the Swedish workers not supported Norway's freedom of secession *unconditionally*, they would have been *chauvinists*, accomplices of the chauvinist Swedish landlords, who wanted to "keep" Norway by force, by war. Had the Norwegian workers *not* raised the question of secession *conditionally*, i.e., allowing even Social-Democratic Party members to conduct propaganda and vote against secession, they would

\* See, for instance, Hourwich's book on immigration and the condition of the working class in America, *Immigration and Labour*.—Ed.

have failed in their internationalist duty and would have sunk to narrow, *bourgeois* Norwegian nationalism. Why? Because the secession was being effected by the *bourgeoisie*, not by the proletariat! Because the Norwegian bourgeoisie (as every other) *always* strives to drive a wedge between the workers of its own and an "alien" country! Because for the class-conscious workers every democratic demand (including self-determination) is *subordinated* to the supreme interests of socialism. For example, if Norway's secession from Sweden had created the certainty or probability of war between Britain and Germany, the Norwegian workers, *for that reason alone*, would have had to oppose secession. The Swedish workers would have had the right and the opportunity, without ceasing to be socialists, to agitate against secession, but *only* if they had waged a systematic, consistent and constant struggle *against* the Swedish Government for Norway's *freedom* to secede. Otherwise the Norwegian workers and people *would not*, and *could not*, accept the advice of the Swedish workers as sincere.

The trouble with the opponents of self-determination is that they confine themselves to lifeless abstractions, *fearing* to analyse to the end a single concrete real-life instance. Our concrete statement in the theses that a new Polish state is quite "achievable" *now*, given a definite combination of purely military, strategic conditions,\* has not been challenged either by the Poles or by P. Kievsky. But no one wanted to *ponder* the conclusions that follow from this tacit admission that we were right. And what follows, obviously, is that internationalist propaganda *cannot* be the same for the Russians and the Poles if it is to educate both for "monistic action". The Great-Russian (and German) worker is in duty bound unconditionally to insist on Poland's freedom to secede; otherwise he will, *in fact*, *now* be the lackey of Nicholas II or Hindenburg. The Polish worker *could* insist on secession *only* conditionally, because to speculate (as do the Fracy) on the victory of one or the other imperialist bourgeoisie is tantamount to becoming *its* lackey. Failure to understand this difference, which is a prerequisite for "monistic ac-

\* See p. 151 of this book.—Ed.

tion" of the International, is about the same as failing to understand why "monistic action" against the tsarist army near Moscow, say, requires that the revolutionary forces march west from Nizhni-Novgorod and east from Smolensk.

\* \* \*

Second, our new exponent of Dühringian monism reproaches us for not striving to achieve "the closest organisational unity of the various national sections of the International" in the event of a social revolution.

Under socialism, P. Kievsky writes, self-determination becomes superfluous, since the state itself ceases to exist. That is meant as an argument against us! But in our theses we clearly and definitely say, in *three* lines, the last three lines of section one, that "democracy, too, is a form of state which must disappear when the state disappears".\* It is precisely this truism that P. Kievsky repeats—to "refute" us, of course!—on *several pages* of his §r (Chapter I), and repeats it in a *distorted way*. "We picture to ourselves," he writes, "and have always pictured the socialist system as a strictly democratic (!!), centralised system of economy in which the state, as the apparatus for the domination of one part of the population over the other, disappears." This is confusion, because democracy *too* is domination "of one part of the population over the other"; it *too* is a form of state. Our author obviously does not understand what is meant by the *withering away* of the state after the victory of socialism and what this process requires.

The main point, however, is his "objections" regarding the era of the social revolution. He calls us "talmudists of self-determination"—what a frightening epithet—and adds: "We picture this process [the social revolution] as the united action of the proletarians of all [!] countries, who wipe out the frontiers of the bourgeois [!] state, who tear down the frontier posts [in addition to "wiping out the frontiers"?] who blow up [!] national unity and establish class unity."

\* See p. 150 of this book.—Ed.

The wrath of this stern judge of the "talmudists" notwithstanding, we must say: there are many words here, but no "ideas".

The social revolution cannot be the united action of the proletarians of *all* countries for the simple reason that most of the countries and the majority of the world's population have not even reached, or have only just reached, the capitalist stage of development. We stated this in section six of our theses\*, but P. Kievsky, because of lack of attention, or inability to think, did "not notice" that we included this section for a definite purpose, namely, to refute caricature distortions of Marxism. *Only* the advanced countries of Western Europe and North America have matured for socialism, and in Engels' letter to Kautsky (*Sbornik "Sotsial-Demokrata"*) Kievsky will find a concrete illustration of the real and not merely promised "idea" that to dream of the "united action of the proletarians of *all* countries" means postponing socialism to the Greek calends, i.e., for ever.

Socialism will be achieved by the united action of the proletarians, not of all, but of a minority of countries, those that have reached the *advanced* capitalist stage of development. The cause of Kievsky's error lies in failure to understand that. In *these* advanced countries (England, France, Germany, etc.) the national problem was solved long ago; national unity outlived its purpose long ago: *objectively*, there are no "general national tasks" to be accomplished. Hence, only in these countries is it possible *now* to "blow up" national unity and establish class unity.

The undeveloped countries are a different matter. They embrace the whole of Eastern Europe and all the colonies and semi-colonies and are dealt with in section six of the theses (second- and third-type countries). In those areas, as a rule, there *still* exist oppressed and capitalistically undeveloped nations. *Objectively*, these nations still have general national tasks to accomplish, namely, *democratic* tasks, the tasks of *overthrowing foreign oppression*.

Engels cited India as an example of such nations, stating that she might perform a revolution against victorious so-

\* See pp. 157-58 of this book.—Ed.

cialism, for Engels was remote from the preposterous imperialist Economism which imagines that having achieved victory in the advanced countries, the proletariat will "automatically", without definite *democratic* measures, abolish national oppression everywhere. The victorious proletariat will reorganise the countries in which it has triumphed. That cannot be done all at once; nor, indeed, can the bourgeoisie be "vanquished" all at once. We deliberately emphasised this in our theses, and Kievsky has again failed to stop and think *why* we stressed this point in connection with the national question.

While the proletariat of the advanced countries is overthrowing the bourgeoisie and repelling its attempts at counter-revolution, the undeveloped and oppressed nations do not just wait, do not cease to exist, do not disappear. If they take advantage even of such a bourgeois imperialist crisis as the war of 1915-16—a minor crisis compared with social revolution—to rise in revolt (the colonies, Ireland), there can be no doubt that they will all the more readily take advantage of the *great crisis* of civil war in the advanced countries to rise in revolt.

The social revolution can come only in the form of an epoch in which are combined civil war by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries and a *whole series* of democratic and revolutionary movements, including the national liberation movement, in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations.

Why? Because capitalism develops unevenly, and objective reality gives us highly developed capitalist nations side by side with a number of economically slightly developed, or totally undeveloped, nations. P. Kievsky has absolutely failed to analyse the *objective* conditions of social revolution from the standpoint of the economic maturity of various countries. His reproach that *we* "invent" instances in which to apply self-determination is therefore an attempt to lay the blame at the wrong door.

With a zeal worthy of a better cause, Kievsky repeatedly quotes Marx and Engels to the effect that "one must not invent things out of his own head, but use his head to discover in the existing material conditions" the means that will free humanity of social evils. When I read those oft-repeated quotations I cannot help recalling the late and un-

lamented Economists who just as tediously... harped on their "new discovery" that capitalism had triumphed in Russia. Kievsky wants to "smite" us with these quotations: he claims that we invent out of our own heads the conditions for applying self-determination in the epoch of imperialism! But we find the following "incautious admission" in his own article:

"The very fact that we are *opposed* [author's italics] to defence of the fatherland shows most clearly that we will actively resist suppression of a national uprising, for we shall thereby be combating imperialism, our mortal enemy" (Chapter II, §r).

To criticise an author, to *answer* him, one has to quote in full at least the main propositions of his article. But in all of Kievsky's propositions you will find that every sentence contains two or three errors or illogicalities that distort Marxism!

1) He is unaware that a national uprising is *also* "defence of the fatherland"! A little thought, however, will make it perfectly clear that this is so, since *every* "nation in revolt" "defends" itself, its language, its territory, its fatherland, against the oppressor nation.

All national oppression calls forth the resistance of the *broad masses* of the people; and the resistance of a nationally oppressed population always *tends* to national revolt. Not infrequently (notably in Austria and Russia) we find the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations *talking* of national revolt, while in practice it enters into reactionary compacts with the bourgeoisie of the oppressor nation behind the backs of, and *against*, its own people. In such cases the criticism of revolutionary Marxists should be directed not against the national movement, but against its degradation, vulgarisation, against the tendency to reduce it to a petty squabble. Incidentally, very many Austrian and Russian Social-Democrats overlook this and in their *legitimate* hatred of the petty, vulgar and sordid national squabbles—disputes and scuffles over the question, for instance, of which language shall have precedence in two-language street signs—refuse to support the national struggle. We shall not "support" a republican farce in, say, the principality of Monaco, or the "republican" adventurism of "generals" in the small states of South America or some

Pacific island. But that does not mean it would be permissible to abandon the republican slogan for serious democratic and socialist movements. We should, and do, ridicule the sordid national squabbles and haggling in Russia and Austria. But that does not mean that it would be permissible to deny support to a national uprising or a serious popular struggle against national oppression.

2) If national uprisings are impossible in the "imperialist era", Kievsky has no right to speak of them. If they are possible, *all* his fine-spun talk about "monism" and our "inventing" examples of self-determination under imperialism, etc., etc., falls to pieces. Kievsky defeats his own arguments.

If "we" "actively resist suppression" of a "national uprising"—a case which P. Kievsky "*himself*" considers possible—what does this mean?

It means that the *action* is twofold, or "dualistic", to employ the philosophical term as incorrectly as our author does: (a) first, it is the "action" of the nationally oppressed proletariat and peasantry *jointly* with the nationally oppressed bourgeoisie *against* the oppressor nation; (b) second, it is the "action" of the proletariat, or of its class-conscious section, in the oppressor nation *against* the bourgeoisie of that nation and all the elements that follow it.

The innumerable phrases against a "national bloc", national "illusions", the "poison" of nationalism, against "fanning national hatred" and the like, to which P. Kievsky resorts, prove to be meaningless. For when he advises the proletariat of the oppressor countries (which, be it remembered, he regards as a serious force) "actively to resist suppression of a national uprising" he thereby *fans* national hatred and *supports* the establishment of a "bloc with the bourgeoisie" by the workers of the oppressed nations.

3) If national uprisings are possible under imperialism, so are national wars. There is no material political difference between the two. Military historians are perfectly right when they put rebellions in the same category as wars. Kievsky has unwittingly refuted not only himself, but also Junius and the *Internationale* group, who deny the *possibility* of national wars under imperialism. And this denial is the only conceivable theoretical ground for

denying self-determination of nations under imperialism.

4) For what is a "national" uprising? It is an uprising aimed at the achievement of *political* independence of the oppressed nation, i.e., the establishment of a *separate* national state.

If the proletariat of the oppressor nation is a serious force (in the imperialist era, as our author rightly assumes), does not its determination "actively to resist suppression of a national uprising" *imply assistance* in creating a separate national state? Of course it does.

Though he denies the "achievability" of self-determination, our brave author now argues that the class-conscious proletariat of the advanced countries must *assist* in achieving this "unachievable" goal!

5) Why must "we" "actively resist" suppression of a national uprising? P. Kievsky advances only one reason: "...we shall thereby be combating imperialism, our mortal enemy." All the *strength* of this argument lies in the *strong* word "mortal". And this is in keeping with his penchant for strong words instead of strong arguments—high-sounding phrases like "driving a stake into the quivering body of the bourgeoisie" and similar Alexinsky flourishes.

But this Kievsky argument is *wrong*. Imperialism is as much our "mortal" enemy as is capitalism. That is so. No Marxist will forget, however, that capitalism is progressive compared with feudalism, and that imperialism is progressive compared with pre-monopoly capitalism. Hence, it is *not* every struggle against imperialism that we should support. We will *not* support a struggle of the reactionary classes against imperialism; we will *not* support an uprising of the reactionary classes against imperialism and capitalism.

Consequently, once the author admits the need to support an uprising of an oppressed nation ("actively resisting" suppression means supporting the uprising), he also admits that a national uprising is *progressive*, that the establishment of a separate and new state, of new frontiers, etc., resulting from a successful uprising, is *progressive*.

In *none* of his political arguments is the author consistent!

The Irish Rebellion of 1916, which took place after our theses had appeared in No. 2 of *Vorbote*, proved,

incidentally, that it was not idle to speak of the possibility of national uprisings *even* in Europe.

## 6. THE OTHER POLITICAL ISSUES RAISED AND DISTORTED BY P. KIEVSKY

Liberation of the colonies, we stated in our theses, means self-determination of nations. Europeans often forget that colonial peoples *too* are nations, but tolerate this "forgetfulness" is to tolerate chauvinism.

P. Kievsky "objects":

In the pure type of colonies, "there is no proletariat in the proper sense of the term" (end of §r, Chapter II). "For whom, then, is the 'self-determination' slogan meant? For the colonial bourgeoisie? For the fellahs? For the peasants? Certainly not. It is absurd for *socialists* [Kievsky's italics] to demand self-determination for the colonies, for it is absurd in general to advance the slogans of a workers' party for countries where there are no workers."

P. Kievsky's anger and his denunciation of our view as "absurd" notwithstanding, we make bold to submit that his arguments are erroneous. Only the late and unlamented Economists believed that the "slogans of a workers' party" are issued *only* for workers.\* No, these slogans are issued for the whole of the labouring population, for the entire people. The democratic part of our programme—Kievsky has given no thought to its significance "in general"—is addressed specifically to the whole people and that is why in it we speak of the "people".\*\*

The colonial and semi-colonial nations, we said, account for 1,000 million people, and P. Kievsky has not taken the trouble to refute that concrete statement. Of these 1,000 million, more than 700 million (China, India, Persia, Egypt) live in countries where *there are* workers. But even with regard to colonial countries where there are no workers,

\* P. Kievsky would do well to reread what A. Martynov and Co. wrote in 1899-1901. He would find many of his "own" arguments there.

\*\* Some curious opponents of "self-determination of nations" try to refute our views with the argument that "nations" are divided into classes! Our customary reply to these caricature Marxists is that the democratic part of our programme speaks of "government by the people".



only slave-owners and slaves, etc., the demand for "self-determination", far from being *absurd*, is *obligatory* for every Marxist. And if he gave the matter a little thought, Kievsky would probably realise this, and also that "self-determination" is always advanced "for" *two* nations: the oppressed and the *oppressing*.

Another of Kievsky's "objections":

"For that reason we limit ourselves, in respect to the colonies, to a negative slogan, i.e., to the demand socialists present to their governments—'get out of the colonies!' Unachievable within the framework of capitalism, this demand serves to intensify the struggle against imperialism, but does not contradict the trend of development, for a socialist society will not possess colonies."

The author's inability, or reluctance, to give the slightest thought to the theoretical contents of political slogans is simply amazing! Are we to believe that the use of a propaganda phrase instead of a theoretically precise political term alters matters? To say "get out of the colonies" is to evade a theoretical analysis and hide behind propaganda phrases! For every one of our Party propagandists, in referring to the Ukraine, Poland, Finland, etc., is fully entitled to demand of the tsarist government (his "own government"): "get out of Finland, etc." However, the intelligent propagandist will understand that we must not advance either positive or negative slogans for the sole purpose of "intensifying" the struggle. Only men of the Alexinsky type could insist that the "negative" slogan "get out of the Black-Hundred Duma" was justified by the desire to "intensify" the struggle against a certain evil.

Intensification of the struggle is an empty phrase of the subjectivists, who forget the Marxist requirement that every slogan be justified by a precise analysis of *economic* realities, the *political* situation and the *political* significance of the slogan. It is embarrassing to have to drive this home, but what can one do?

We know the Alexinsky habit of cutting short a theoretical discussion of a theoretical question by propaganda outcries. It is a bad habit. The slogan "get out of the colonies" has one and only one political and economic content: freedom of secession for the colonial nations, freedom to establish a separate state! If, as P. Kievsky believes, the *general* laws of imperialism prevent the self-determination

of nations and make it a utopia, illusion, etc., etc., then how can one, without stopping to think, make an exception from these general laws for *most* of the nations of the world? Obviously, P. Kievsky's "theory" is a caricature of theory.

Commodity production and capitalism, and the connecting threads of finance capital, exist in the vast majority of colonial countries. How, then, can we urge the imperialist countries, their governments, to "get out of the colonies" if, *from the standpoint* of commodity production, capitalism and imperialism, this is an "unscientific" and "utopian" demand, "refuted" *even* by Lensch, Cunow and the rest?

There is not even a shadow of *thought* in the author's argumentation!

He has given no thought to the fact that liberation of the colonies is "unrealisable" *only* in the sense of being "unrealisable without a series of revolutions". He has given no thought to the fact that it is 'realisable in *conjunction* with a socialist revolution in Europe. He has given no thought to the fact that a "socialist society will not possess" *not only* colonies, but subject nations in *general*. He has given no thought to the fact that, on the question under discussion, there is *no* economic or political difference between Russia's "possession" of Poland or Turkestan. He has given no thought to the fact that a "socialist society" will wish to "get out of the colonies" *only* in the sense of granting them the free *right* to secede, but definitely *not* in the sense of *recommending secession*.

And for this differentiation between the right to secede and the recommendation to secede, P. Kievsky condemns us as "jugglers", and to "scientifically substantiate" that verdict in the eyes of the workers, he writes:

"What is a worker to think when he asks a propagandist how the proletariat should regard *samostiinost* [political independence for the Ukraine], and gets this answer: socialists are working for the right to secede, but their propaganda is against secession?"

I believe I can give a fairly accurate reply to that question, namely: every sensible worker will *think* that Kievsky is *not capable of thinking*.

Every sensible worker will "think": here we have P. Kievsky telling us workers to shout "get out of the colonies". In other words, we Great-Russian workers must demand from our government that it get out of Mongolia, Turkestan, Persia; English workers must demand that the English Government get out of Egypt, India, Persia, etc. But does this mean that *we* proletarians *wish* to separate ourselves from the Egyptian workers and fellahs, from the Mongolian, Turkestan or Indian workers and peasants? Does it mean that *we* advise the labouring masses of the colonies to "separate" from the class-conscious European proletariat? Nothing of the kind. Now, as always, we stand and shall continue to stand for the closest association and merging of the class-conscious workers of the advanced countries with the workers, peasants and slaves of *all* the oppressed countries. We have always advised and shall continue to advise all the oppressed classes in all the oppressed countries, the colonies included, *not* to separate from us, but to form the closest possible ties and merge with us.

We demand from our governments that they quit the colonies, or, to put it in precise political terms rather than in agitational outcries—that they *grant* the colonies full *freedom* of secession, the genuine *right to self-determination*, and we ourselves are sure to implement this right, and grant this freedom, as soon as we capture power. We demand this from existing governments, and will *do* this when we are the government, *not* in order to "recommend" secession, but, on the contrary, in order to facilitate and accelerate the *democratic* association and merging of nations. We shall exert every effort to foster association and merger with the Mongolians, Persians, Indians, Egyptians. We believe it is our duty and *in our interest* to do this, for otherwise socialism in Europe will *not be secure*. We shall endeavour to render these nations, more backward and oppressed than we are, "disinterested cultural assistance", to borrow the happy expression of the Polish Social-Democrats. In other words, we will help them pass to the use of machinery, to the lightening of labour, to democracy, to socialism.

If we demand freedom of secession for the Mongolians, Persians, Egyptians and *all* other oppressed and unequal nations without exception, we do so not because *we fa-*

*your secession*, but *only* because we stand for *free, voluntary* association and merging as distinct from forcible association. That is the *only* reason!

And in this respect the *only* difference between the Mongolian or Egyptian peasants and workers and their Polish or Finnish counterparts is, in our view, that the latter are more developed, more experienced politically than the Great Russians, more economically prepared, etc., and for that reason will in all likelihood *very soon* convince their peoples that it is unwise to extend their present legitimate hatred of the Great Russians, for their role of hangman, to the *socialist* workers and to a socialist Russia. They will convince them that economic expediency and internationalist and democratic instinct and consciousness demand the earliest association of all nations and their merging in a socialist society. And since the Poles and Finns are highly cultured people, they will, in all probability, very soon come to see the correctness of this attitude, and the possible secession of Poland and Finland after the triumph of socialism will therefore be only of short duration. The incomparably less cultured fellahs, Mongolians and Persians might secede for a longer period, but we shall try to shorten it by disinterested cultural assistance as indicated above.

There is *no* other difference in our attitude to the Poles and Mongolians, nor can there be. There is *no* "contradiction", nor can there be, between our propaganda of freedom of secession and our firm resolve to implement that freedom when *we* are the government, and our propaganda of association and merging of nations. That is what, we feel sure, every sensible worker, every genuine socialist and internationalist will "think" of our controversy with P. Kievsky.\*

\* Evidently Kievsky simply *repeated* the slogan "get out of the colonies", advanced by certain German and Dutch Marxists, without considering not only its theoretical content and implications, but also the specific features of Russia. It is pardonable—to a certain extent—for a Dutch or German Marxist to confine himself to the slogan "get out of the colonies". For, first, the *typical* form of national oppression, in the case of most West-European countries, is oppression of the colonies, and, second, the very term "colony" has an especially clear, graphic and vital meaning for West-European countries.

Running through the article is Kievsky's basic doubt: why advocate and, when we are in power, implement the freedom of nations to *secede*, considering that the trend of development is towards the *merging* of nations? For the same reason—we reply—that we advocate and, when in power, will implement the dictatorship of the proletariat, though the entire trend of development is towards abolition of coercive domination of one part of society over another. Dictatorship is domination of one part of society over the rest of society, and domination, moreover, that rests directly on coercion. Dictatorship of the proletariat, the only consistently revolutionary class, is necessary to overthrow the bourgeoisie and repel its attempts at counter-revolution. The question of proletarian dictatorship is of such overriding importance that he who denies the need for such dictatorship, or recognises it only in words, cannot be a member of the Social-Democratic Party. However, it cannot be denied that in individual cases, by way of exception, for instance, in some small country after the social revolution has been accomplished in a neighbouring big country, peaceful surrender of power by the bourgeoisie is *possible*, if it is convinced that resistance is hopeless and if it prefers to save its skin. It is much more likely, of course, that even in small states socialism will *not* be achieved without civil war, and for that reason the *only* programme of international Social-Democracy must be recognition of civil war, though violence is, of course, alien to our ideals. The same, *mutatis mutandis* (with the *necessary* alterations), is applicable to nations. We favour their merger, but *now* there can be no transition from forcible merger and annexation to voluntary merger without freedom of secession. We recognise—and quite rightly—the predominance of the

But what of Russia? Its peculiarity lies precisely in the fact that the difference between "*our*" "colonies" and "*our*" oppressed nations is not clear, not concrete and not vitally felt!

For a Marxist writing in say, German it might be pardonable to overlook this peculiarity of Russia; for Kievsky it is unpardonable. The sheer absurdity of trying to discover some serious difference between oppressed nations and colonies in the case of Russia should be especially clear to a Russian socialist who wants not simply to *repeat*, but to *think*.

economic factor, but to interpret it *à la* Kievsky is to make a caricature of Marxism. Even the trusts and banks of modern imperialism, though inevitable everywhere as part of developed capitalism, differ in their concrete aspects from country to country. There is a still greater difference, despite homogeneity in essentials, between political forms in the advanced imperialist countries—America, England, France, Germany. The same variety will manifest itself also in the path mankind will follow from the imperialism of today to the socialist revolution of tomorrow. All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life. There is nothing more primitive from the viewpoint of theory, or more ridiculous from that of practice, than to paint, "in the name of historical materialism", *this* aspect of the future in a monotonous grey. The result will be nothing more than Suzdal daubing.\* And even if reality were to show that *prior* to the first victory of the socialist proletariat only  $\frac{1}{500}$  of the nations now oppressed will win emancipation and secede, that *prior* to the final victory of the socialist proletariat the world over (i.e., during all the vicissitudes of the socialist revolution) also only  $\frac{1}{500}$  of the oppressed nations will secede for a very short time—even in that event we would be correct, both from the theoretical and practical political standpoint, in advising the workers, already now, not to permit into their Social-Democratic parties those socialists of the oppressor nations who do not recognise and do not advocate freedom of secession for *all* oppressed nations. For the fact is that we do not know, and cannot know, how many of the oppressed nations will in practice require secession in order to contribute something of their own to the different *forms* of democracy, the different *forms* of transition to socialism. And that the negation of freedom of secession now is theoretically false from beginning to end and in practice amounts to servility to the chauvinists of the oppressing nations—this we know, see and feel daily.

\* I. e. crude, primitive work.—Ed.

"We emphasise," P. Kievsky writes in a footnote to the passage quoted above, "that we fully support the demand 'against forcible annexation'...."

But he makes no reply, not even by a single word, to our perfectly clear statement that this "demand" is tantamount to recognising self-determination, that there can be no correct definition of the concept "annexation" unless it is seen in context with self-determination. Presumably Kievsky believes that in a discussion it is enough to present one's arguments and demands without any supporting evidence!

He continues: "... We fully accept, in their *negative* formulation, a number of demands that tend to sharpen proletarian consciousness against imperialism, but there is absolutely no possibility of working out corresponding *positive* formulations on the basis of the existing system. Against war, yes, but not for a democratic peace...."

Wrong—wrong from the first word to the last. Kievsky has read our resolution on "Pacifism and the Peace Slogan" (in the pamphlet *Socialism and War*, pp. 44-45) and even approved it, I believe. But obviously he did not understand it. We are *for* a democratic peace, only we warn the workers against the deception that such a peace is possible under the present, bourgeois governments "without a series of revolutions", as the resolution points out. We denounced as a deception of the workers the "abstract" advocacy of peace, i.e., one that does *not* take into account the real class nature, or, specifically, the imperialist nature of the *present* governments in the belligerent countries. We definitely stated in the *Sotsial-Demokrat*<sup>92</sup> (No. 47) theses that if the revolution places our Party in power during the present war, it will immediately propose a democratic peace to all the warring countries.

Yet, anxious to convince himself and others that he is opposed "only" to self-determination and not to democracy in general, Kievsky ends up by asserting that we are "not for a democratic peace". Curious logic!

There is no need to dwell on all the other examples he cites, and no sense in wasting space on refuting them, for they are on the same level of naïve and fallacious logic and can only make the reader smile. There is not, nor can there be, such a thing as a "negative" Social-Democratic slogan that serves only to "sharpen proletarian consciousness against imperialism" without at the same time offer-

ing a positive answer to the question of *how* Social-Democracy will solve the problem when it assumes power. A "negative" slogan unconnected with a definite positive solution will not "sharpen", but dull consciousness, for such a slogan is a hollow phrase, mere shouting, meaningless declamation.

P. Kievsky does not understand the difference between "negative" slogans that stigmatise *political* evils and *economic* evils. The difference lies in the fact that certain economic evils are part of capitalism as such, whatever the political superstructure, and that it is *impossible* to eliminate them economically without eliminating capitalism itself. Not a single instance can be cited to disprove this. On the other hand, political evils represent a departure from democracy which, economically, is fully possible "on the basis of the existing system", i.e., capitalism, and by way of exception is being implemented under capitalism—certain aspects in one country, other aspects in another. Again, what the author fails to understand is precisely the fundamental conditions necessary for the implementation of democracy in general!

The same applies to the question of divorce. The reader will recall that it was first posed by Rosa Luxemburg in the discussion on the *national* question. She expressed the perfectly justified opinion that if we uphold autonomy within a state (for a definite region, area, etc.), we must, as centralist Social-Democrats, insist that all major national issues—and *divorce* legislation is one of them—should come within the jurisdiction of the central government and central parliament. This example clearly demonstrates that one cannot be a democrat and socialist without demanding full freedom of divorce now, because the lack of such freedom is additional oppression of the oppressed sex—though it should not be difficult to realise that recognition of the *freedom* to leave one's husband is not an *invitation* to all wives to do so!

P. Kievsky "objects":

"What would this right (of divorce) be like if in *such* cases (when the wife *wants* to leave the husband) she could *not* exercise her right? Or if its exercise depended on the will of *third* parties, or, worse still, on the will of claimants to her affections? Would we advocate the proclamation of *such* a right? Of course not!"

That objection reveals complete failure to understand the relation between democracy *in general* and capitalism. The conditions that make it impossible for the oppressed classes to "exercise" their democratic rights are not the exception under capitalism; they are typical of the system. In most cases the right of divorce will remain unrealisable under capitalism, for the oppressed sex is subjugated economically. No matter how much democracy there is under capitalism, the woman remains a "domestic slave", a slave locked up in the bedroom, nursery, kitchen. The right to elect their "own" people's judges, officials, school-teachers, jurymen, etc., is likewise in most cases unrealisable under capitalism precisely because of the economic subjection of the workers and peasants. The same applies to the democratic republic: our programme defines it as "government by the people", though all Social-Democrats know perfectly well that under capitalism, even in the most democratic republic, there is bound to be bribery of officials by the bourgeoisie and an alliance of stock exchange and the government.

Only those who cannot think straight or have no knowledge of Marxism will conclude: so there is no point in having a republic, no point in freedom of divorce, no point in democracy, no point in self-determination of nations! But Marxists know that democracy does *not* abolish class oppression. It only makes the class struggle more direct, wider, more open and pronounced, and that is what we need. The fuller the freedom of divorce, the clearer will women see that the source of their "domestic slavery" is capitalism, not lack of rights. The more democratic the system of government, the clearer will the workers see that the root evil is capitalism, not lack of rights. The fuller national equality (and it is *not* complete without freedom of secession), the clearer will the workers of the oppressed nations see that the cause of their oppression is capitalism, not lack of rights, etc.

It must be said again and again: It is embarrassing to have to drive home the ABC of Marxism, but what is one to do if Kievsky does not know it?

He discusses divorce in much the same way as one of the secretaries of the Organising Committee abroad, Semkovsky, discussed it, if I remember rightly, in the Paris

*Golos*<sup>94</sup>. His line of reasoning was that freedom of divorce is not, it is true, an invitation to all wives to leave their husbands, but if it is proved that all other husbands are better than yours, madame, then it amounts to one and the same thing!!

In taking that line of argument Semkovsky forgot that crank thinking is not a violation of socialist or democratic principles. If Semkovsky were to tell a woman that all other husbands were better than hers, no one would regard this as violation of democratic principles. At most people would say: There are bound to be big cranks in a big party! But if Semkovsky were to take it into his head to defend as a democrat a person who opposed freedom of divorce and appealed to the courts, the police or the church to prevent his wife leaving him, we feel sure that *even* most of Semkovsky's colleagues on the Secretariat Abroad, though they are sorry socialists, would refuse to support him!

Both Semkovsky and Kievsky, in their "discussion" of divorce, fail to understand the issue and avoid its substance, namely, that under capitalism the right of divorce, as *all* other democratic rights without exception, is conditional, restricted, formal, narrow and extremely difficult of realisation. Yet no self-respecting Social-Democrat will consider anyone opposing the right of divorce a democrat, let alone a socialist. That is the crux of the matter. *All* "democracy" consists in the proclamation and realisation of "rights" which under capitalism are realisable only to a very small degree and only relatively. But without the proclamation of these rights, without a struggle to introduce them now, immediately, without training the masses in the spirit of this struggle, socialism is *impossible*.

Having failed to understand that, Kievsky bypasses the central question, that belongs to his special subject, namely, *how* will we Social-Democrats abolish national oppression? He shunts the question aside with phrases about the world being "drenched in blood", etc. (though this has no bearing on the matter under discussion). This leaves only one single argument: the socialist revolution will solve everything! Or, the argument sometimes advanced by people who share his views: self-determination is impossible under capitalism and superfluous under socialism.

From the theoretical standpoint that view is nonsensical; from the practical political standpoint it is chauvinistic. It fails to appreciate the significance of democracy. For socialism is impossible without democracy because: (1) the proletariat cannot perform the socialist revolution unless it prepares for it by the struggle for democracy; (2) victorious socialism cannot consolidate its victory and bring humanity to the withering away of the state without implementing full democracy. To claim that self-determination is superfluous under socialism is therefore just as nonsensical and just as hopelessly confusing as to claim that democracy is superfluous under socialism.

Self-determination is *no more* impossible under capitalism, and *just as* superfluous under socialism, as democracy generally.

The economic revolution will create the necessary prerequisites for eliminating *all* types of political oppression. Precisely for that reason it is illogical and incorrect to reduce everything to the economic revolution, for the question is: *how* to eliminate national oppression? It cannot be eliminated without an economic revolution. That is incontestable. But to *limit* ourselves to this is to lapse into absurd and wretched imperialist Economism.

We must carry out national *equality*; proclaim, formulate and implement equal "rights" for all nations. *Everyone* agrees with that save, perhaps, P. Kievsky. But this poses a question which Kievsky avoids: is not negation of the *right* to form a national state negation of equality?

Of course it is. And consistent, *i.e.*, socialist, democrats proclaim, formulate and will implement this right, without which there is no path to complete, voluntary rapprochement and merging of nations.

## 7. CONCLUSION. ALEXINSKY METHODS

We have analysed only a fraction of P. Kievsky's arguments. To analyse *all* of them would require an article five times the length of this one, for these is not a single correct view in the whole of what Kievsky has to say. What is *correct*—if there are no mistakes in the figures—is the footnote data on banks. All the rest is an impossible tangle of confu-

sion peppered with phrases like "driving a stake into the quivering body", "we shall not only judge the conquering heroes, but condemn them to death and elimination", "the new world will be born in agonising convulsions", "the question will not be one of granting charters and rights, nor of proclaiming the freedom of the nations, but of establishing genuinely free relationships, destroying age-old slavery and social oppression in general, and national oppression in particular", and so on and so forth.

These phrases are, at one and the same time, the cover and expression of two things: first, their underlying "idea" is *imperialist Economism*, which is just as ugly a caricature of Marxism, and just as complete a misinterpretation of the relationship between socialism and democracy, as was the late and unlamented Economism of 1894-1902.

Second, we have in these phrases a repetition of Alexinsky methods. This should be especially emphasised, for a whole section of Kievsky's article (Chapter II, §f, "The Special Position of the Jews") is based *exclusively* on these methods.

At the 1907 London Congress the Bolsheviks would dissociate themselves from Alexinsky when, in reply to theoretical arguments, he would pose as an agitator and resort to highfalutin, but entirely irrelevant, phrases against one or another type of exploitation and oppression. "He's begun his shouting again," our delegates would say. And the "shouting" did not do Alexinsky any good.

There is the same kind of "shouting" in Kievsky's article. He has no reply to the theoretical questions and arguments expounded in the theses. Instead, he poses as an agitator and begins shouting about the oppression of the Jews, though every thinking person will realise that his shouting, and the Jewish question in general, have no relation whatever to the subject under discussion.

Alexinsky methods can lead to no good.

Written August-October 1916

First published in the magazine  
*Zvezda* Nos. 1 and 2, 1924

*Collected Works*, Vol. 23,  
pp. 28-76



Among the Dutch, Scandinavian and Swiss revolutionary Social-Democrats who are combating the social-chauvinist lies about "defence of the fatherland" in the present imperialist war, there have been voices in favour of replacing the old Social-Democratic minimum-programme demand for a "militia", or "the armed nation", by a new demand: "disarmament". The *Jugend-Internationale*<sup>95</sup> has inaugurated a discussion on this issue and published, in No.3, an editorial supporting disarmament. There is also, we regret to note, a concession to the "disarmament" idea in R. Grimm's latest theses.<sup>96</sup> Discussions have been started in the periodicals *Neues Leben*<sup>97</sup> and *Vorbote*.<sup>98</sup>

Let us take a closer look at the position of the disarmament advocates.

I

Their principal argument is that the disarmament demand is the clearest, most decisive, most consistent expression of the struggle against all militarism and against all war.

But in this principal argument lies the disarmament advocates' principal error. Socialists cannot, without ceasing to be socialists, be opposed to all war.

Firstly, socialists have never been, nor can they ever be, opposed to revolutionary wars. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist "Great" Powers has become thoroughly reactionary, and the war *this* bourgeoisie is now waging we regard as a reactionary, slave-owners' and criminal war. But what about a war *against* this bourgeoisie? A war, for instance, waged by peoples oppressed by and dependent upon this bourgeoisie, or by colonial peoples, for liberation?

In §5 of the *Internationale* group theses we read: "National wars are no longer possible in the era of this unbridled imperialism." That is obviously wrong.

The history of the twentieth century, this century of "unbridled imperialism", is replete with colonial wars. But what we Europeans, the imperialist oppressors of the majority of the world's peoples, with our habitual, despicable European chauvinism, call "colonial wars" are often national wars, or national rebellions of these oppressed peoples. One of the main features of imperialism is that it accelerates capitalist development in the most backward countries, and thereby extends and intensifies the struggle against national oppression. That is a fact, and from it inevitably follows that imperialism must often give rise to national wars. *Junius*, who defends the above-quoted "theses" in her pamphlet, says that in the imperialist era every national war against an imperialist Great Power leads to the intervention of a rival imperialist Great Power. Every national war is thus turned into an imperialist war. But that argument is wrong too. This *can* happen, but does not always happen. Many colonial wars between 1900 and 1914 did not follow that course. And it would be simply ridiculous to declare, for instance, that after the present war, if it ends in the utter exhaustion of all the belligerents, "there can be no" national, progressive, revolutionary wars "of any kind", waged, say, by China in alliance with India, Persia, Siam, etc., against the Great Powers.

To deny all possibility of national wars under imperialism is wrong in theory, obviously mistaken historically, and tantamount to European chauvinism in practice: we who belong to nations that oppress hundreds of millions in Europe, Africa, Asia, etc., are invited to tell the oppressed peoples that it is "impossible" for them to wage war against "our" nations!

Secondly, civil war is just as much a war as any other. He who accepts the class struggle cannot fail to accept civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions inevitable, continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. That has been confirmed by every great revolution. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, is to fall into extreme opportunism and renounce the socialist revolution.

Thirdly, the victory of socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes wars. The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in different countries. It cannot be otherwise under commodity production. From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois. This is bound to create not only friction, but a direct attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the socialist state's victorious proletariat. In such cases a war on our part would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie. Engels was perfectly right when, in his letter to Kautsky of September 12, 1882, he clearly stated that it was possible for *already victorious* socialism to wage "defensive wars". What he had in mind was defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.

Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not merely of one country, will wars become impossible. And from a scientific point of view it would be utterly wrong—and utterly unrevolutionary—for us to evade or gloss over the most important thing: crushing the resistance of the bourgeoisie—the most difficult task, and one demanding the greatest amount of fighting, in the *transition* to socialism. The "social" parsons and opportunists are always ready to build dreams of future peaceful socialism. But the very thing that distinguishes them from revolutionary Social-Democrats is that they refuse to think about and reflect on the fierce class struggle and class wars needed to achieve that beautiful future.

We must not allow ourselves to be led astray by words. The term "defence of the fatherland", for instance, is hateful to many because both avowed opportunists and Kautskyites use it to cover up and gloss over the bourgeois lie about the *present* predatory war. This is a fact. But it does not follow that we must no longer see through to the meaning of political slogans. To accept "defence of the fatherland" in the present war is no more nor less than to accept

it as a "just" war, a war in the interests of the proletariat—no more nor less, we repeat, because invasions may occur in any war. It would be sheer folly to repudiate "defence of the fatherland" *on the part* of oppressed nations in their wars *against* the imperialist Great Powers, or on the part of a victorious proletariat in *its* war against some Gallifet of a bourgeois state.

Theoretically, it would be absolutely wrong to forget that every war is but the continuation of policy by other means. The present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist policies of two groups of Great Powers, and these policies were engendered and fostered by the sum total of the relationships of the imperialist era. But this very era must also necessarily engender and foster policies of struggle against national oppression and of proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie and, consequently, also the possibility and inevitability, first, of revolutionary national rebellions and wars; second, of proletarian wars and rebellions *against* the bourgeoisie; and, third, of a combination of both kinds of revolutionary war, etc.

Written in German in September 1916

First published in the newspaper  
*Jugend-Internationale*  
Nos. 9 and 10  
September and October 1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 23,  
pp. 77-80

Dear Comrade,

You question my remark as to the *possibility* of transforming the present imperialist war, *too*, into a national war.

Your argument? "We shall have to defend an imperialist fatherland"....

Is that logical? If the fatherland remains "imperialist", how can the war then be national??

The talk about "possibilities", in my opinion, has been theoretically wrongly introduced by Radek, and by §5 of the theses of the *Internationale*.<sup>99</sup>

Marxism takes its stand on the facts, and not on possibilities.

A Marxist must, as the foundation of his policy, put *only* precisely and unquestionably demonstrated facts.

That is what our (Party) resolution does.\*

When *instead* of it we are presented with "impossibility", I reply: untrue, un-Marxist, a cliché. All kinds of transformation are *possible*.

And I quote a historical fact (the wars of 1792-1815). I take this example to illustrate the possibility of something like that nowadays (if there is a development *backwards*).

In my opinion, *you* are confusing the possible (about which it was *not* I who began talking!!) with the real, when you think that the recognition of a possibility allows us to alter our tactics. That is the height of illogicality.

I recognise the possibility that a Social-Democrat may be transformed into a bourgeois, *and the reverse*.

An indubitable truth. Does it follow from this that I will now recognise a *particular* bourgeois, Plekhanov, as

\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 158-64.—Ed.

a Social-Democrat? No, it does not follow. But what about the possibility? Let's wait for it to be transformed into reality.

That's all. It is precisely in "methodology" (about which you write) that one must distinguish the possible from the real.

*All kinds* of transformation are possible, even of a fool into a wise man, but such a transformation rarely becomes *actual*. And merely because of the "possibility" of such a transformation I shall not cease to consider the fool to be a fool.

Your perplexities about "dualistic" training are not clear to me. For I *concretely* gave the example (Norway) both in *Prosveshcheniye*\* and in my article against Kievsky.\*\*

You *don't* reply to that!! You choose the quite unclear example of Poland.

This is not "dualistic" training, but *reducing* different things to a common denominator, bringing Nizhni and Smolensk to a *common* Moscow.

A Swedish Social-Democrat who does not stand for the *freedom* of secession for Norway is a scoundrel. This you do not challenge. A Norwegian Social-Democrat may be either *for* secession or *against* it. Is unity on such a question obligatory for all Social-Democrats of all countries? No. That would be a cliché, a ridiculous cliché, a ridiculous pretension.

We never blamed the Polish Social-Democrats (I wrote this in *Prosveshcheniye*) because *they* were against the independence of Poland.

Instead of a simple, clear, theoretically unchallengeable argument: we cannot now be for the *kind* of democratic demand (for an independent Poland) that *in practice* subordinates us *completely* to one of the imperialist powers or coalitions

(this is unquestionable, this is enough; it is essential and sufficient)

—instead of this they talked themselves into an absurd-

\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, pp. 425-30.—Ed.

\*\* See pp. 199-206 of this book.—Ed.

ity: "It is unrealisable."

We laughed this out of court in 1903 and in April 1916.

The good Polish Social-Democrats almost, almost proved the unrealisability of a new Polish state, only ... only the imperialist Hindenburg interfered: he went and realised it.<sup>100</sup>

To what ridiculous pedantry people descend when they desire (from the Cracow point of view<sup>101</sup>) to make more profound (or more foolish?) the "economic" aspect! !

The P.S.D. \* have got themselves into the position of repudiating "*Staatenbau*"\*\*! ! But is not all democracy *Staatenbau*? And the independence for the Dutch Indies which Gorter demands, is *not* that the *Staatenbau*?

We are for freedom of secession for the Dutch Indies. But is a Social-Democrat of the Dutch Indies *bound* to be for secession? There is another example for you of what you call "dualistic" training! !

War is the continuation of politics. Belgium is a colonialist country, you argue. Nevertheless, shall we really be unable to determine *which* politics the *present* war continues, the politics of Belgian slave-owning or of Belgian liberation??

I think we shall be able to.

And if anyone loses his way, that will be a question of *fact*.

One cannot, after all, "prohibit" national wars (as Radek wants) out of fear that brainless people or swindlers *again* pretend that the imperialist war is a national one! ! That is ridiculous, yet that is the conclusion from what Radek is saying.

We are not against a *national* insurrection, we are *for* it. That is clear. And we cannot go further than that: we shall consider each case concretely, and I don't think we shall take the rebellion of the South in the United States in 1863 as a "national insurrection"....

I had Engels's article from the Grünberg Archives,<sup>102</sup> but

\* Polish Social-Democrats.—Ed.

\*\* "Building of a state".—Ed.

sent it away to Grigory. I shall get it back from him and *send it to you*.

Very best greetings,

Yours,

Lenin

N.K. asks me very much to send her greetings too.

Written later than  
November 5, 1916

First published in 1925  
in *Lenin Miscellany III*

*Collected Works*, Vol. 35,  
pp. 242-45

Dear Friend,

As regards "defence of the fatherland" I don't know whether we differ or not. You find a contradiction between my article in the collection of articles *To the Memory of Marx\** and my present statements, *without quoting* either precisely. I cannot reply to this. I haven't got the collection *To the Memory of Marx*. Of course, I cannot remember word for word what I wrote in it. Without *precise* quotations, then and now, I am not able to reply to *such* an argument on your part.

But *generally* speaking, it seems to me that you argue somehow in a somewhat one-sided and formalist manner. You have taken *one* quotation from the *Communist Manifesto* (the working men have no country) and you seem to want to apply it without any reservations, *up to and including the repudiation of national wars*.

The whole spirit of Marxism, its whole system, demands that each proposition should be considered (a) only historically, (b) only in connection with others, (c) only in connection with the concrete experience of history.

The fatherland is an historical concept. The fatherland in an epoch or, more precisely, at the *moment* of struggle for the overthrow of national oppression, is one thing. At the moment when national movements have been left far behind, it is another thing. For the "three types of countries" (§6 of our theses on self-determination\*\*) there *cannot* be a proposition about the fatherland, and its defence, identically applicable in all conditions.

In the *Communist Manifesto* it is said that the working men have no country.

Correct. But *not only* this is stated there. It is stated

\* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 29-39.—Ed.

\*\* See pp. 157-58 of this book.—Ed.

there also that when national states are being formed the role of the proletariat is somewhat special. To take the first proposition (the working men have no country) and *forget* its *connection* with the second (the workers are constituted as a class nationally, though not in the same sense as the bourgeoisie) will be exceptionally incorrect.

Where, then does the connection lie? In my opinion, precisely in the fact that in the *democratic* movement (at such a moment, in such concrete circumstances) the proletariat cannot refuse to support it (and, consequently, support defence of the fatherland in a national war).

Marx and Engels said in the *Communist Manifesto* that the working men have no country. But the same Marx *called* for a *national* war more than once: Marx in 1848, Engels in 1859 (the end of his pamphlet *Po and Rhine*, where the *national* feeling of the Germans is directly inflamed, where they are directly called upon to wage a national war). Engels in 1891, in view of the then threatening and advancing war of France (Boulanger) + Alexander III against Germany, *directly* recognised "defence of the fatherland".<sup>103</sup>

Were Marx and Engels muddlers who said one thing today and another thing tomorrow? No. In my view, admission of "defence of the fatherland" in a national war *fully* answers the requirements of Marxism. In 1891 the German *Social-Democrats* really *should* have defended their fatherland in a war against Boulanger + Alexander III. This would have been a peculiar variety of *national* war.

Written on November 30, 1916  
Sent from Zurich to Clarens  
(Switzerland)

First published in 1949  
in *Bolshevik* No. 1

*Collected Works*, Vol. 35,  
pp. 250-51

Dear Friend,

About Radek you, following Grigory, seem to have got confused between personal impressions and sadness over the "dark" political picture in general and politics. You are sorry, you regret, you sigh—and nothing more. No other policy than that which was followed *could* have been pursued. We could not renounce correct views and surrender to "Ty-szka's methods". The picture is "dark" not because of this, and the Lefts are weak not because of this, and *Vorbote* is not appearing not because of this—but because the revolutionary movement grows extremely slowly and with difficulty. This has to be put up with; rotten blocs with a certain person (or with E. B. + Kū) would only interfere with performing the difficult task of standing fast in difficult times.

As regards "imperialist Economism", it somehow turns out that we are "talking past each other". You *evade* the definition I gave, *pass it by* and put the question again.

The "Economists" did not "renounce" political struggle (as you write)—that is inaccurate. They defined it *wrongly*. The "imperialist Economists" do the same.

You write: "Would even the complete rejection of democratic demands mean rejecting the political struggle? Is not the *direct struggle* for the conquest of power political struggle?"

The whole point is that with Bukharin (and partly with Radek as well) this is just the kind of thing you get, and it is wrong. "The direct struggle for the conquest of power" while "completely rejecting democratic demands" is something unclear, unthought-out, confused. This is just what Bukharin is confused about.

More precisely, you approach the question from rather a different point of view, when you see a contradiction between §§2 and 8.

In §2 there is a *general* statement: the socialist revolution is *impossible* without the struggle for democracy. This is unquestionable, and this is just the weakness of Radek + Bukharin that they, while *disagreeing* (like you), don't venture to challenge it!!

But further, in a certain sense for a certain period, *all* democratic aims (not only self-determination! Note that! You have forgotten that! ) are capable of hindering the socialist revolution. In what sense? At what moment? When? How? For example, if the movement has already developed, *the revolution has already begun*, we have to *seize the banks*, and we are being appealed to: wait, *first* consolidate, legitimise the republic, etc.!

An example: in August 1905, the boycott of the Duma was correct, and was not rejection of political struggle.

((§ 2=*in general*, refusal to participate in representative institutions is an absurdity; §8=there are cases when we *have* to refuse; there is a visual comparison for you which makes clear that there is *no* contradiction between §2 and §8.))

Against Junius. The situation is the imperialist war. The remedy for it? Only a socialist revolution in Germany. Junius did not draw this conclusion, and took democracy *without* the socialist revolution.

One should know how to *combine* the struggle for democracy and the struggle for the socialist revolution, *subordinating* the first to the second. In this lies the whole difficulty; in this is the whole essence.

The Tolstoyans, and the anarchists throw out the first. Bukharin and Radek have become confused, failing to combine the first with the second.

But I say: don't lose sight of the *main* thing (the socialist revolution); put it first (Junius has not done this); put *all* the democratic demands, but subordinating them to it, co-ordinating them with it (Radek + Bukharin unwisely eliminate *one* of them), and bear in mind that the struggle for the main thing may blaze up even though it has begun with the struggle for something partial. In my opinion, only this conception of the matter is the right one.

A war of France + Russia against Germany in 1891. You take "my criterion", and apply it *only* to France and Rus-



sia! ! ! ! For pity's sake, where is the logic here? That's just what I say, that *on the part of France and Russia* it would have been a reactionary war (a war in order to turn back the development of Germany, to return her from national unity to dismemberment). *But on the part of Germany?* You are silent. Yet that is the chief thing. For Germany in 1891, the war did not, and could not, have an imperialist character.

You have forgotten the main thing—that in 1891 no imperialism existed at all (I have tried to show in my pamphlet that it was born in 1898-1900, not earlier), and there was no imperialist war, there could not be, on the part of Germany. (By the way, there was no revolutionary Russia then either; that is very important.)

Furthermore, you write: "The 'possibility' of the dismemberment of Germany is not excluded in the 1914-17 war either", simply sliding away from the assessment of what exists to what is *possible*.

That is not historical. It is not political.

What *exists* today is an *imperialist* war on *both* sides. This we have said 1,000 times. This is the essence.

And the "possible"! ! ?? All kinds of things are "possible"!

It is ridiculous to deny the "*possibility*" of transforming the imperialist war into a national war (though Usiyevich was horrified at the idea!). What is not "*possible*" on this earth! But *so far* it has not been transformed. Marxism buttresses its policy on the *actual*, not on the "*possible*". It is possible that one phenomenon will change into another—and our tactics are not fossilised. *Parlez-moi de la réalité et non pas des possibilités!*\*.

Engels was right. In my day I have seen an awful lot of hasty charges that Engels was an opportunist, and my attitude to them is supremely distrustful. Try, I say, and prove first that Engels was wrong! ! You won't prove it!

Engels's foreword to *The Class Struggles in France*? Don't you know that it was distorted in Berlin *against* his will? Is that serious criticism?

His statement about the Belgian strike? When? Where?

\* Talk to me of reality and not of possibilities!—Ed.

What? I don't know it.

No. No. Engels was *not* infallible. Marx was *not* infallible. But if you want to point out their "fallibility" you have to set about it differently, really, quite differently. Otherwise you are 1,000 times wrong.

Very, very best greetings.

Yours,  
Lenin

Written on December 25, 1916

Sent from Zurich to Clarens  
(Switzerland)

First published in 1949  
in *Bolshevik* No. 1

*Collected Works*, Vol. 35,  
pp. 266-69

Dear Friend,

About Engels. If you have run across the issue of *Neue Zeit* with Kautsky's story (and Engels's letters) about how they distorted Engels's preface to *Klassenkämpfe*, it would be a good thing if you copied it out in full detail in a special notebook. If you can't, then send me the exact number of *Neue Zeit*, the year, volume and page.<sup>104</sup>

Your attacks on Engels, I am convinced, are totally groundless. Excuse my frankness. One must prepare much more seriously before writing like that! Otherwise it's easy to disgrace oneself—I warn you *entre nous*, as a friend, between ourselves, in case you begin talking in this way some day in the press or at a meeting.

The Belgian strike? First of all it is possible that on this question of fact, an individual question, Engels was mistaken. Of course, that is possible. One must collect everything he wrote on this question. Secondly, events in recent times in general, 1905 definitely, have provided something new about general strikes, which Engels did not know. Engels had been accustomed for decades to hear about the "general strike" only the empty phrases of the anarchists, whom he legitimately hated and despised. But later events have demonstrated a new type of "mass strike", a political one, i.e., a particularly non-anarchist one. This new feature Engels did not know yet, and could not know.

This must not be forgotten.

Was not the Belgian strike a transition from the old to the new? Could Engels at that time (1891-92?? He was already 71-72; dying) see that this was not the old Belgian belch (the Belgians for a long time were Proudhonists), but the transition to something new? This must be thought over.

As regards "defence of the fatherland", in my opinion, you are falling into abstraction and unhistoricalness. I re-

peat what I said in the article against Yuri: defence of the fatherland = justification for taking part in the war. Nothing more. To generalise this, to make it a "general principle", is ridiculous, supremely unscientific. (I will send you the American programme of the S.L.P.,\* with this ridiculous generalisation). Wars are a supremely varied, diverse, complex thing. One cannot approach them with a general pattern.

(I) Three main types: the relation of an oppressed nation to the oppressor (every war is the continuation of politics; politics is the *relationship* between nations, classes, etc.) As a general rule, war is legitimate on the part of the oppressed (irrespective of whether it is defensive or offensive in the military sense).

(II) The relation between two oppressor nations. The struggle for colonies, for markets, etc. (Rome and Carthage; Britain and Germany 1914-17). As a general rule, a war of that kind is robbery on *both* sides; and the attitude of democracy (and socialism) to it comes under the rule: "Two thieves are fighting, may they both perish"....

(III) The third type. A *system* of nations with equal rights. This question is *much more complex!!!* Especially if side by side with civilised, comparatively democratic nations there stands tsarism. That's how it was (approximately) in Europe from 1815 to 1905.

1891. The colonial policy of France and Germany was insignificant. Italy, Japan, the United States had no colonies at all (now they have). In Western Europe a *system* had come into being (N.B. this! ! Think over this! ! Don't forget this! ! We live not only in separate states, but also in a certain *system* of states; it is permissible for the anarchists to ignore this; we are not anarchists), a *system* of states, on the whole constitutional and national. Side by side with them was powerful, unshaken, pre-revolutionary tsarism, which had plundered and oppressed everyone for hundreds of years, which crushed the revolutions of 1849 and 1863.

Germany (in 1891) was the country of *advanced* socialism. And this country was menaced by tsarism in alliance with Boulangism!

The situation was quite, quite different from what it is

\* Socialist Labor Party.—Ed.

in 1914-17, when tsarism has been undermined by 1905, while Germany is waging a war to dominate the world. A *different* pair of shoes! !

To identify, even to compare the international situations of 1891 and 1914, is the *height* of unhistoricalness.

Stupid Radek wrote recently in the Polish manifesto ("*Befreiung Polens*") that "*Staatenbau*" is not the aim of the Social-Democratic struggle. This is arch-stupidity! It is half-anarchism, half-idiocy! No, no, we are not at all indifferent to the *Staatenbau*, to the *system* of states, to their *mutual relations*.

Engels was the father of "passive radicalism"?? Untrue! Nothing of the kind. You will never be able to prove this. (Bogdanov and Co. tried, but only disgraced themselves.)

In the *imperialist* war of 1914-17, between *two* imperialist coalitions, we must be against "defence of the fatherland", since (1) imperialism is the eve of socialism, (2) imperialist war is a war of thieves over their booty, (3) in *both* coalitions there is an *advanced* proletariat, (4) in both a socialist revolution is *ripe*. *Only* for these reasons are we against "defence of the fatherland", *only* for these reasons! !

Best greetings and wishes.

Yours,

Lenin

I have sent for the addresses of the youth organisations. They have been promised me.

And so, as regards the plan of publication: *push ahead* with the affair. And your lecture *on pacifism*?! 05

P.S. I got both your last two letters at once, but it must have been my own fault.

Written on January 19, 1917

Sent from Zurich to Clarens  
(Switzerland)

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## From THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OUR REVOLUTION

(Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party)

14. As regards to the national question, the proletarian party first of all must advocate the proclamation and immediate realisation of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or forcibly kept within the boundaries of, the state, i.e., annexed.

All statements, declarations and manifestos concerning renunciation of annexations that are not accompanied by the realisation of the right of secession in practice, are nothing but bourgeois deception of the people, or else pious petty-bourgeois wishes.

The proletarian party strives to create as large a state as possible, for this is to the advantage of the working people; it strives to *draw* nations *closer together*, and bring about their *further fusion*; but it desires to achieve this aim not by violence, but exclusively through a free fraternal union of the workers and the working people of all nations.

The more democratic the Russian republic, and the more successfully it organises itself into a Republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the more powerful will be the force of *voluntary* attraction to such a republic on the part of the working people of *all* nations.

Complete freedom of secession, the broadest local (and national) autonomy, and elaborate guarantees of the rights of national minorities—this is the programme of the revolutionary proletariat.

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THE SEVENTH (APRIL) ALL-RUSSIA  
CONFERENCE OF THE R.S.D.L.P. (B.)  
APRIL 24-29 (MAY 7-12), 1917

RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The policy of national oppression, inherited from the autocracy and monarchy, is maintained by the landowners, capitalists, and petty bourgeoisie in order to protect their class privileges and to cause disunity among the workers of the various nationalities. Modern imperialism, which increases the tendency to subjugate weaker nations, is a new factor intensifying national oppression.

The elimination of national oppression, if at all achievable in capitalist society, is possible only under a consistently democratic republican system and state administration that guarantee complete equality for all nations and languages.

The right of all the nations forming part of Russia freely to secede and form independent states must be recognised. To deny them this right, or to fail to make measures guaranteeing its practical realisation, is equivalent to supporting a policy of seizure or annexation. Only the recognition by the proletariat of the right of nations to secede can ensure complete solidarity among the workers of the various nations and help to bring the nations closer together on truly democratic lines.

The conflict which has arisen at the present time between Finland and the Russian Provisional Government<sup>106</sup> strikingly demonstrates that denial of the right to free secession leads to a direct continuation of the policy of tsarism.

The right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the advisability of secession by a given nation at a given moment. The party of the proletariat must decide the latter question quite independently in each particular case, having regard to the interests of social development as a whole and the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism.

The Party demands broad regional autonomy, the aboli-

tion of supervision from above, the abolition of a compulsory official language, and the fixing of the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions in accordance with the economic and social conditions, the national composition of the population, and so forth, as assessed by the local population itself.

The party of the proletariat emphatically rejects what is known as "national cultural autonomy", under which education, etc., is removed from the control of the state and put in the control of some kind of national diets. National cultural autonomy artificially divides the workers living in one locality, and even working in the same industrial enterprise, according to their various "national cultures", in other words, it strengthens the ties between the workers and the bourgeois culture of their nations, whereas the aim of the Social-Democrats is to develop the international culture of the world proletariat.

The party demands that a fundamental law be embodied in the constitution annulling all privileges enjoyed by any one nation and all infringements of the rights of national minorities.

The interests of the working class demand that the workers of all nationalities in Russia should have common proletarian organisations: political, trade union, co-operative educational institutions, and so forth. Only the merging of the workers of the various nationalities into such common organisations will make it possible for the proletariat to wage a successful struggle against international capital and bourgeois nationalism.

Finland's attitude to Russia has become the topic of the day. The Provisional Government has *failed* to meet the demand of the Finnish people, which, *so far*, is not for secession, but only for broad autonomy.

The Provisional Government's undemocratic, annexationist policy was formulated and "defended" the other day by *Rabochaya Gazeta*.<sup>107</sup> It could not have made a more "damning" defence than it did. This is indeed a fundamental issue, an issue of state significance, which deserves the closest attention.

"The Organising Committee believes," writes *Rabochaya Gazeta* No. 42, "that the general problem of Finnish-Russian relations can and should be settled only by an agreement between the Finnish Diet and the Constituent Assembly. Pending this, the Finnish comrades [the Organising Committee has had talks with the Finnish Social-Democrats] should bear in mind that if separate tendencies in Finland were to increase, this would be likely to strengthen the centralist tendencies of the Russian bourgeoisie."

That is the point of view of the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, the Cadets, but not of the proletariat. The programme of the Social-Democratic Party, namely, §9, which recognises the right of self-determination for all nation members of the state, has been thrown overboard by the Menshevik Social-Democrats. They have, in effect, renounced this programme and taken sides with the bourgeoisie, just as they did on the question of the replacement of the standing army by the universally armed people, and so on.

The capitalists, the bourgeoisie, including the Cadet Party, never did recognise the right of nations to political self-determination, i.e., *freedom to secede* from Russia. The Social-Democratic Party *recognised* this right in § 9 of its programme, adopted in 1903.<sup>108</sup>

When the Organising Committee "recommended" to the Finnish Social-Democrats an "agreement" between the Finnish Diet and the Constituent Assembly,<sup>109</sup> they

were, on this question, taking sides with the bourgeoisie. One merely has to compare the positions of *all* the principal classes and parties to see the truth of this.

The tsar, the Rights, the monarchists, are not for an agreement between the Diet and the Constituent Assembly—they are for subjecting Finland to the Russian nation. The republican bourgeoisie are for an *agreement* between the Finnish Diet and the Constituent Assembly. The class-conscious proletariat and the Social-Democrats, *true* to their programme, are for the *right* of Finland, as of all the other unprivileged nations, to *secede from* Russia. We have here a clear, precise, and indisputable picture. Under the guise of an "agreement", which cannot settle anything—for what are you going to do if an agreement is *not* reached?—the bourgeoisie is pursuing the same old tsarist policy of subjection and annexation.

For Finland was annexed by the Russian tsars as the result of a deal with the suppressor of the French revolution, Napoleon, etc. If we are really against annexations, we should say: *give Finland the right of secession. Not until* this has been said and accomplished can an "agreement" with Finland be a really free and voluntary agreement, a real agreement, and not just a fake.

Agreement is possible only between equals. If the agreement is to be a real agreement, and not a verbal screen for subjection, *both* parties to it must enjoy real equality of status, that is to say, both *Russia and Finland* must have the right to *disagree*. That is as clear as daylight.

Only by "freedom of secession" can that right be expressed. Only when she is free to secede will Finland really be in a position to enter into an "agreement" with Russia as to whether she should secede or not. *Without* this condition, without recognising the right of secession, all phrasemongering about an "agreement" is self-deception and deception of the people.

The Organising Committee should have told the Finns plainly whether it recognises the right of secession or not. It befogged the issue, like the Cadets, and thereby repudiated the right of secession. It should have attacked the Russian bourgeoisie for denying the oppressed nations the right to secede, a denial which is *tantamount to annexation*. Instead, the Organising Committee attacks the Finns

and warns them that "separate" (they should have said separatist) tendencies would strengthen centralist inclinations! In other words, the Organising Committee threatens the Finns with the strengthening of the annexationist Great-Russian bourgeoisie—just what the Cadets have always done, the very guise under which Rodichev and Co. are pursuing *their* annexationist policy.

We have here a clear and practical commentary on the question of annexations, which "everybody" is now talking about, though afraid to face the issue squarely. *To be against the right of secession is to be for annexations.*

The tsars pursued a crude policy of annexation, bartering one nation for another by agreement with other monarchs (the partition of Poland, the deal with Napoleon over Finland, and so on), just like the landowners, who used to exchange peasant serfs. The bourgeoisie, on turning republican, is carrying on the *same* policy of annexation, only more subtly, less openly, by *promising* an "agreement" while *taking away* the only effective guarantee of real equality in the making of an agreement, namely, the right of secession. The Organising Committee is dragging at the tail-end of the bourgeoisie, and in practice taking its side. (*Birzhevka*<sup>110</sup> was therefore quite right in reprinting all the salient points of the *Rabochaya Gazeta* article and approving the Organising Committee's reply to the Finns, which it called a "lesson by Russian democracy" to the Finns. *Rabochaya Gazeta* deserved this kiss from *Birzhevka*.)

At its conference, the party of the proletariat (the Bolsheviks) once more confirmed the right of secession in its resolution on the national question.<sup>111</sup>

The alignment of classes and parties is clear.

The petty bourgeois are letting themselves be frightened by the spectre of a frightened bourgeoisie—that is the whole crux of the policy of the Menshevik Social-Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. They are "afraid" of secession. The class-conscious proletarians are *not* afraid of it. Both Norway and Sweden gained from Norway's free secession from Sweden in 1905, it made for mutual trust between the two nations, it drew them closer together on a voluntary basis, it did away with the stupid and destructive friction, it strengthened the economic and political, the cultural and social *gravitation* of the two nations

to each other, and strengthened the fraternal alliance between the workers of the two countries.

Comrades, workers and peasants, do not be influenced by the annexationist policy of the Russian capitalists, Guchkov, Milyukov, and the Provisional Government towards Finland, Kurland, Ukraine, etc.! Do not fear to recognise the right of all these nations to secede! Nations must be won over to the idea of an alliance with the Great Russians not by force, but by a really voluntary and really free agreement, which is *impossible* without the right of secession.

The freer Russia is, and the more resolutely our republic recognises the right of non-Great-Russian nations to secede, the more strongly will other nations be *attracted* towards an alliance with us, the less friction will there be, the more rarely will actual secession occur, the shorter the period of secession will last, and the closer and more enduring—in the long run—will the fraternal alliance be between the Russian proletarian and peasant republic and the republics of all other nations.

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May 15 (2), 1917

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It is interesting, moreover, that the "non-Russian groups" revealed a considerable predominance of opponents of a coalition, namely, 40 votes against 15. The policy of annexation and open violence pursued by the Bonapartist Kerensky and Co. towards the non-sovereign nations of Russia has borne fruit. Wide sections of the people of the oppressed nations (i.e., including the mass of the petty bourgeoisie) trust the proletariat of Russia more than they do the bourgeoisie, for here history has brought to the fore the struggle for liberation of the oppressed nations against the oppressing nations. The bourgeoisie has despicably betrayed the cause of freedom of the oppressed nations; the proletariat is faithful to the cause of freedom.

At the present time the national and agrarian questions are fundamental questions for the petty-bourgeois sections of the population of Russia. This is indisputable. And on both these questions the proletariat is "not isolated"—farther from it than ever. It has the majority of the people behind it. It *alone* is capable of pursuing such a determined, genuinely "revolutionary-democratic" policy on both questions which would immediately ensure the proletarian state power not only the support of the majority of the population, but also a real outburst of revolutionary enthusiasm among the people. This is because, for the first time, the people would not see the ruthless oppression of peasants by landowners and of Ukrainians by Great Russians on the part of the government, as was the case under tsarism, nor the effort to continue the same policy camouflaged in pompous phrases under the republic, nor nagging, insult, chicanery, procrastination, underhand dealing and evasions (all that with which Kerensky rewards the peasants and the oppressed nations), but would receive warm sympathy proved by deeds, immediate and revolutionary measures against the landowners, immediate resti-

tution of *full* freedom for Finland, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, for the Moslems, and so on.

The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik gentlemen know this perfectly well, and are therefore dragging in the semi-Cadet bosses of the co-operative societies to help them pursue their *reactionary-democratic* policy *against* the people. That is why they will never dare canvass popular opinion, take a popular referendum, or at least a vote of all the local Soviets, of all the local organisations, concerning definite points of practical policy, for example, whether all the landed estates should at once be handed over to peasant committees, whether certain demands of the Finns or the Ukrainians should be conceded, etc.

Take the question of peace, the crucial issue of today. The proletariat "is isolated from the other classes"... On this issue the proletariat truly represents the *whole* nation, all live and honest people *in all* classes, the vast majority of the petty bourgeoisie; because only the proletariat, on achieving power, will *immediately* offer a just peace to all the belligerent nations, because only the proletariat will dare take genuinely *revolutionary* measures (publication of the secret treaties, and so forth) to achieve the speediest and most just peace possible.

The proletariat is not isolated. The gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn*<sup>112</sup> who are shouting about the proletariat being isolated are only betraying their subjective fear of the bourgeoisie. The objective state of affairs in Russia is undoubtedly such that the proletariat, *precisely at the present time*, is not "isolated" from the majority of the petty bourgeoisie. Precisely now, after the sad experience with the "coalition", the proletariat enjoys the sympathy of the *majority* of the people. *This* condition for the retention of power by the Bolsheviks *does exist*.

Written at the end of September-  
October 1 (14), 1917

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SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS'  
AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES  
OCTOBER 25-26 (NOVEMBER 7-8), 1917

DECREE ON PEACE  
OCTOBER 26 (NOVEMBER 8)

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and the other working people of all the belligerent countries,<sup>113</sup> exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposes that this kind of peace be immediately concluded by all the belligerent nations, and expresses its readiness to take all the resolute measures now, without the least delay, pending the final ratification of all the terms of such a peace by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

In accordance with the sense of justice of democrats in general, and of the working classes in particular, the government conceives the annexation or seizure of foreign lands to mean every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time when such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the borders of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protests and uprisings against national oppression—it is not accorded the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, i. e., seizure and violence.

The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war over the issue of how to divide among the strong and rich nations the weak nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the terms indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception.

At the same time the government declares that it does not regard the above-mentioned peace terms as an ultimatum; in other words, it is prepared to consider any other peace terms, and insists only that they be advanced by any of the belligerent countries as speedily as possible, and that in the peace proposals there should be absolute clarity and the complete absence of all ambiguity and secrecy.

The government abolishes secret diplomacy, and, for its part, announces its firm intention to conduct all negotiations quite openly in full view of the whole people. It will proceed immediately with the full publication of the secret treaties endorsed or concluded by the government of landowners and capitalists from February to October 25, 1917. The government proclaims the unconditional and immediate annulment of everything contained in these secret treaties insofar as it is aimed, as is mostly the case, at securing advantages and privileges for the Russian landowners and capitalists and at the retention, or extension, of the annexations made by the Great Russians.

Proposing to the governments and peoples of all countries immediately to begin open negotiations for peace, the government, for its part, expresses its readiness to conduct these negotiations in writing, by telegraph, and by negotia-

tions between representatives of the various countries, or at a conference of such representatives. In order to facilitate such negotiations, the government is appointing its plenipotentiary representative to neutral countries.

The government proposes an immediate armistice to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, and for its part, considers it desirable that this armistice should be concluded for a period of not less than three months, i. e., a period long enough to permit the completion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples or nations, without exception, involved in or compelled to take part in the war, and the summoning of authoritative assemblies of the representatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the peace terms.

While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia appeals in particular also to the class-conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind and the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany. The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and socialism; they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England,<sup>114</sup> a number of revolutions of historic importance effected by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany<sup>115</sup> and the prolonged, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organisations in Germany, a work which serves as a model to the workers of the whole world. All these examples of proletarian heroism and historical creative work are a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now faces them of saving mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences, that these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely vigorous action, will help us to conclude peace successfully, and at the same time emancipate the labouring and exploited masses of our population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation.

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the support of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, must start immediate negotiations for peace. Our appeal must be addressed both to the governments and to the peoples. We cannot ignore the governments, for that would delay the possibility of concluding peace, and the people's government dare not do that; but we have no right not to appeal to the peoples at the same time. Everywhere there are differences between the governments and the peoples and we must therefore help the peoples to intervene in questions of war and peace. We will, of course, insist upon the whole of our programme for a peace without annexations and indemnities. We shall not retreat from it; but we must not give our enemies an opportunity to say that their conditions are different from ours and that therefore it is useless to start negotiations with us. No, we must deprive them of that advantageous position and not present our terms in the form of an ultimatum. Therefore the point is included that we are willing to consider any peace terms and all proposals. We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them. We shall submit them for consideration to the Constituent Assembly which will have the power to decide what concessions can and what cannot be made. We are combating the deception practised by governments which pay lip-service to peace and justice, but in fact wage annexationist and predatory wars. No government will say all it thinks. We, however, are opposed to secret diplomacy and will act openly in full view of the whole people. We do not close our eyes to difficulties and never have done. War cannot be ended by refusal, it cannot be ended by one side. We are proposing an armistice for three months, but shall not reject a shorter period, so that the exhausted army may breathe freely, even if only for a little while; moreover, in all the civilised countries national assemblies must be summoned for the discussion of the terms.

In proposing an immediate armistice, we appeal to the class-conscious workers of the countries that have done so much for the development of the proletarian movement. We appeal to the workers of Britain, where there was the Chartist movement, to the workers of France, who have

in repeated uprisings displayed the strength of their class-consciousness, and to the workers of Germany, who waged the fight against the Anti-Socialist Law and have created powerful organisations.

In the Manifesto of March 14,<sup>116</sup> we called for the overthrow of the bankers, but, far from overthrowing our own bankers, we entered into an alliance with them. Now we have overthrown the government of the bankers.

The governments and the bourgeoisie will make every effort to unite their forces and drown the workers' and peasants' revolution in blood. But the three years of war have been a good lesson to the masses—the Soviet movement in other countries and the mutiny in the German navy, which was crushed by the officer cadets of Wilhelm the hangman<sup>117</sup>. Finally we must remember that we are not living in the depths of Africa, but in Europe, where news can spread quickly.

The workers' movement will triumph and will pave the way to peace and socialism. (*Prolonged applause.*)

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*Izvestia* No. 208

*Collected Works*, Vol. 26,  
pp. 249-53

## DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE<sup>118</sup>

- I. The Constituent Assembly resolves:
  1. Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.
  2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.
- II. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves:
  1. Private ownership of land is hereby abolished. All land together with all buildings, farm implements and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is proclaimed the property of the entire working people.
  2. The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Economic Council are hereby confirmed for the purpose of guaranteeing the power of the working people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.
  3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the working people from the yoke of capital.
  4. For the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted.
  5. To ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied

classes are hereby decreed.

- III. 1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organising most extensive fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same end in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and proclaiming freedom of self-determination for Armenia.<sup>119</sup>

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, the landowners and the bourgeoisie as a first blow struck at international banking, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that Soviet power will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

- IV. Having been elected on the basis of party lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, when the people were not yet in a position to rise *en masse* against the exploiters, had not yet experienced the full strength of resistance of the latter in defence of their class privileges, and had not yet applied themselves in practice to the task of building socialist society, the Constituent Assembly considers that it would be fundamentally wrong, even formally, to put itself in opposition to Soviet power.

In essence the Constituent Assembly considers that now, when the people are waging the last fight against their ex-

ploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Supporting Soviet power and the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, the Constituent Assembly considers that its own task is confined to establishing the fundamental principles of the socialist reconstruction of society.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

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From ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE ARTICLE  
"THE IMMEDIATE TASKS  
OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT"

We are for democratic centralism. And it must be clearly understood how vastly different democratic centralism is from bureaucratic centralism on the one hand, and from anarchism on the other. The opponents of centralism continually put forward autonomy and federation as a means of struggle against the uncertainties of centralism. As a matter of fact, democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy, on the contrary, it presupposes the necessity of it. As a matter of fact, even federation, if carried out within limits that are rational from an economic point of view, if it is based on important national distinctions that give rise to a real need for a certain degree of state separateness—even federation is in no way in contradiction to democratic centralism. Under a really democratic system, and the more so with the Soviet organisation of the state, federation is very often merely a transitional step towards really democratic centralism. The example of the Russian Soviet Republic shows us particularly clearly that federation, which we are introducing and will introduce, is now the surest step towards the most lasting union of the various nationalities of Russia into a single democratic centralised Soviet state.

And just as democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy and federation, so, too, it in no way excludes, but on the contrary presupposes, the fullest freedom of various localities and even of various communes of the state in developing multifarious forms of state, social and economic life. There is nothing more mistaken than confusing democratic centralism with bureaucracy and routinism. Our task now is to carry out democratic centralism in the economic sphere, to ensure absolute harmony and unity in the functioning of such economic undertakings as the railways, the postal and telegraph services, other means of transport, and so forth. At the same time, centralism,

understood in a truly democratic sense, presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal. The task of organising competition, therefore, has two aspects: on the one hand, it requires the carrying out of democratic centralism as described above, on the other hand, it makes it possible to find the most correct and most economical way of reorganising the economic structure of Russia. In general terms, this way is known. It consists in the transition to large-scale economy based on machine industry, in the transition to socialism. But the concrete conditions and forms of this transition are and must be diverse, depending on the conditions under which the advance aiming at the creation of socialism begins. Local distinctions, specific economic formations, forms of everyday life, the degree of preparedness of the population, attempts to carry out a particular plan—all these are bound to be reflected in the specific features of the path to socialism of a particular labour commune of the state. The greater such diversity—provided, of course, that it does not turn into eccentricity—the more surely and rapidly shall we ensure the achievement of both democratic centralism and a socialist economy. It only remains for us now to organise competition, i. e., to ensure publicity which would enable all communes in the state to learn how economic development has proceeded in various localities; to ensure, secondly, that the results of the advance towards socialism in one commune of the state are comparable with those in another; to ensure, thirdly, that the experience acquired in one commune can be repeated in practice by other communes; to ensure the possibility of an exchange of those material—and human—forces which have done well in any particular sphere of the national economy or of the state administration. Crushed by the capitalist system, we cannot at present even imagine at all accurately what rich forces lie hidden in the mass of the working people, in the diversity of labour communes of a large state, in the forces of the intelligentsia, who have hitherto worked as lifeless, dumb executors of the capitalists' pre-determined plans, what forces are lying hidden

and can reveal themselves given a socialist structure of society. What we have to do is only to clear the way for these forces. If we devote ourselves to the organisation of competition as a matter of state importance, then—provided that Soviet principles of the state system are implemented, provided that private ownership of land, factories, etc., is abolished—the results are inevitably bound to show themselves and will dictate our further forms of construction.

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and 28, 1918

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From ADDRESS TO THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA  
CONGRESS OF COMMUNIST ORGANISATIONS  
OF THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST  
NOVEMBER 22, 1919

I think that what the Red Army has accomplished, its struggle, and the history of its victory, will be of colossal, epochal significance for all the peoples of the East. It will show them that, weak as they may be, and invincible as may seem the power of the European oppressors, who in the struggle employ all the marvels of technology and of the military art—nevertheless, a revolutionary war waged by oppressed peoples, if it really succeeds in arousing the millions of working and exploited people, harbours such potentialities, such miracles, that the emancipation of the peoples of the East is now quite practicable, from the standpoint not only of the prospects of the international revolution, but also of the direct military experience acquired in Asia, in Siberia, the experience of the Soviet Republic, which has suffered the armed invasion of all the powerful imperialist countries.

Furthermore, the experience of the Civil War in Russia has shown us and the Communists of all countries that, in the crucible of civil war, the development of revolutionary enthusiasm is accompanied by a powerful inner cohesion. War tests all the economic and organisational forces of a nation. In the final analysis, infinitely hard as the war has been for the workers and peasants, who are suffering famine and cold, it may be said on the basis of these two years' experience that we are winning and will continue to win, because we have a hinterland, and a strong one, because, despite famine and cold, the peasants and workers stand together, have grown strong, and answer every heavy blow with a greater cohesion of their forces and increased economic might. And it is this alone that has made possible the victories over Kolchak, Yudenich and their allies, the strongest powers in the world. The past two years have shown, on the one hand, that a revolutionary war can be developed, and, on the other, that the



Soviet system is growing stronger under the heavy blows of the foreign invasion, the aim of which is to destroy quickly the revolutionary centre, the republic of workers and peasants who have dared to declare war on international imperialism. But instead of destroying the workers and peasants of Russia, these heavy blows have served to harden them.

That is the chief lesson, the chief content of the present period....

Permit me, in conclusion, to say something about the situation that is developing in respect of the nationalities of the East. You are representatives of the communist organisations and Communist Parties of various Eastern peoples. I must say that the Russian Bolsheviks have succeeded in forcing a breach in the old imperialism, in undertaking the exceedingly difficult, but also exceedingly noble task of blazing new paths of revolution, whereas you, the representatives of the working people of the East, have before you a task that is still greater and newer. It is becoming quite clear that the socialist revolution which is impending for the whole world will not be merely the victory of the proletariat of each country over its own bourgeoisie. That would be possible if revolutions came easily and swiftly. We know that the imperialists will not allow this, that all countries are armed against their domestic Bolshevism and that their one thought is how to defeat Bolshevism at home. That is why in every country a civil war is brewing in which the old socialist compromisers are enlisted on the side of the bourgeoisie. Hence, the socialist revolution will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie—no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries, against international imperialism. Characterising the approach of the world social revolution in the Party Programme we adopted last March, we said that the civil war of the working people against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national wars against international imperialism. That is confirmed by the course of the revolution, and will be more and more confirmed as time goes on. It will be the same in the East.

We know that in the East the masses will rise as independent participants, as builders of a new life, because hundreds of millions of the people belong to dependent, underprivileged nations, which until now have been objects of international imperialist policy, and have only existed as material to fertilise capitalist culture and civilisation. And when they talk of handing out mandates for colonies, we know very well that it means handing out mandates for spoliation and plunder—handing out to an insignificant section of the world's population the right to exploit the majority of the population of the globe. That majority, which up till then had been completely outside the orbit of historical progress, because it could not constitute an independent revolutionary force, ceased, as we know, to play such a passive role at the beginning of the twentieth century. We know that 1905 was followed by revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China, and that a revolutionary movement developed in India. The imperialist war likewise contributed to the growth of the revolutionary movement, because the European imperialists had to enlist whole colonial regiments in their struggle. The imperialist war aroused the East also and drew its peoples into international politics. Britain and France armed colonial peoples and helped them to familiarise themselves with military technique and up-to-date machines. That knowledge they will use against the imperialist gentry. The period of the awakening of the East in the contemporary revolution is being succeeded by a period in which all the Eastern peoples will participate in deciding the destiny of the whole world, so as not to be simply objects of the enrichment of others. The peoples of the East are becoming alive to the need for practical action, the need for every nation to take part in shaping the destiny of all mankind.

That is why I think that in the history of the development of the world revolution—which, judging by its beginning, will continue for many years and will demand much effort—that in the revolutionary struggle, in the revolutionary movement you will be called upon to play a big part and to merge with our struggle against international imperialism. Your participation in the international revolution will confront you with a complicated and difficult task, the accomplishment of which will serve as the

foundation for our common success, because here the majority of the people for the first time begin to act independently and will be an active factor in the fight to overthrow international imperialism.

Most of the Eastern peoples are in a worse position than the most backward country in Europe—Russia. But in our struggle against feudal survivals and capitalism, we succeeded in uniting the peasants and workers of Russia; and it was because the peasants and workers united against capitalism and feudalism that our victory was so easy. Here contact with the peoples of the East is particularly important, because the majority of the Eastern peoples are typical representatives of the working people—not workers who have passed through the school of capitalist factories, but typical representatives of the working and exploited peasant masses who are victims of medieval oppression. The Russian revolution showed how the proletarians, after defeating capitalism and uniting with the vast diffuse mass of working peasants, rose up victoriously against medieval oppression. Our Soviet Republic must now muster all the awakening peoples of the East and, together with them, wage a struggle against international imperialism.

In this respect you are confronted with a task which has not previously confronted the Communists of the world: relying upon the general theory and practice of communism, you must adapt yourselves to specific conditions such as do not exist in the European countries; you must be able to apply that theory and practice to conditions in which the bulk of the population are peasants, and in which the task is to wage a struggle against medieval survivals and not against capitalism. That is a difficult and specific task, but a very thankful one, because masses that have taken no part in the struggle up to now are being drawn into it, and also because the organisation of communist cells in the East gives you an opportunity to maintain the closest contact with the Third International. You must find specific forms for this alliance of the foremost proletarians of the world with the labouring and exploited masses of the East whose conditions are in many cases medieval. We have accomplished on a small scale in our country what you will do on a big scale and in big countries. And that latter task you will, I hope, perform

with success. Thanks to the communist organisations in the East, of which you here are the representatives, you have contact with the advanced revolutionary proletariat. Your task is to continue to ensure that communist propaganda is carried on in every country in a language the people understand.

It is self-evident that final victory can be won only by the proletariat of all the advanced countries of the world, and we, the Russians, are beginning the work which the British, French or German proletariat will consolidate. But we see that they will not be victorious without the aid of the working people of all the oppressed colonial nations, first and foremost, of Eastern nations. We must realise that the transition to communism cannot be accomplished by the vanguard alone. The task is to arouse the working masses to revolutionary activity, to independent action and to organisation, regardless of the level they have reached; to translate the true communist doctrine, which was intended for the Communists of the more advanced countries, into the language of every people; to carry out those practical tasks which must be carried out immediately, and to join the proletarians of other countries in a common struggle.

Such are the problems whose solution you will not find in any communist book, but will find in the common struggle begun by Russia. You will have to tackle that problem and solve it through your own independent experience. In that you will be assisted, on the one hand, by close alliance with the vanguard of the working people of other countries, and, on the other, by ability to find the right approach to the peoples of the East whom you here represent. You will have to base yourselves on the bourgeois nationalism which is awakening, and must awaken, among those peoples, and which has its historical justification. At the same time, you must find your way to the working and exploited masses of every country and tell them in a language they understand that their only hope of emancipation lies in the victory of the international revolution, and that the international proletariat is the only ally of all the hundreds of millions of the working and exploited peoples of the East.

Such is the immense task which confronts you, and

which, thanks to the era of revolution and the growth of the revolutionary movement—of that there can be no doubt—will, by the joint efforts of the communist organisations of the East, be successfully accomplished and crowned by complete victory over international imperialism.

*Bulletin of the C.C.,*  
R. C. P. (B.) No. 9,  
December 20, 1919

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pp. 153-54, 158-62

### From "LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM— AN INFANTILE DISORDER

It is now essential that Communists of every country should quite consciously take into account both the fundamental objectives of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism, and the *concrete features* which this struggle assumes and must inevitably assume in each country, in conformity with the specific character of its economics, politics, culture, and national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, and so on and so forth. Dissatisfaction with the Second International is felt everywhere and is spreading and growing, both because of its opportunism and because of its inability or incapacity to create a really centralised and really leading centre capable of directing the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for a world Soviet republic. It should be clearly realised that such a leading centre can never be built up on stereotyped, mechanically equated, and identical tactical rules of struggle. As long as national and state distinctions exist among peoples and countries—and these will continue to exist for a very long time to come, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world-wide scale—the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement in all countries demands, not the elimination of variety or the suppression of national distinctions (which is a pipe dream at present), but an application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat), which will *correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state distinctions. To seek out, investigate, predict, and grasp that which is nationally specific and nationally distinctive, in the *concrete manner* in which each country should tackle a *single* international task: victory over opportunism and Left doctrinairism within the working-class movement; the over-

throw of the bourgeoisie; the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship—such is the basic task in the historical period that all the advanced countries (and not they alone) are going through. The chief thing—though, of course, far from everything—the chief thing has already been achieved: the vanguard of the working class has been won over, has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government and against parliamentarianism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat and against bourgeois democracy. All efforts and all attention should now be concentrated on the *next* step, which may seem—and from a certain viewpoint actually is—less fundamental, but, on the other hand, is actually closer to a practical accomplishment of the task. That step is: the search after forms of the *transition* or the *approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without this, not even the first step towards victory can be made. But that is still quite a long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone. To throw only the vanguard into the decisive battle, before the entire class, the broad masses, have taken up a position either of direct support for the vanguard, or at least of sympathetic neutrality towards it and of precluded support for the enemy, would be, not merely foolish but criminal. Propaganda and agitation alone are not enough for an entire class, the broad masses of the working people, those oppressed by capital, to take up such a stand. For that, the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, which has been confirmed with compelling force and vividness, not only in Russia but in Germany as well...

In Western Europe and in America, the Communists must learn to create a new, uncustomary, non-opportunistic, and non-careerist parliamentarianism; the Communist parties must issue their slogans; true proletarians, with the help of the unorganised and downtrodden poor, should distribute leaflets, canvass workers' houses and cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are many times fewer remote villages in Europe than in Russia, and in Britain the number is very small); they should go into the public houses, penetrate

into unions, societies and chance gatherings of the common people, and speak to the people, not in learned (or very parliamentary) language; they should not at all strive to "get seats" in parliament, but should everywhere try to get people to think, and draw the masses into the struggle, to take the bourgeoisie at its word and utilise the machinery it has set up, the elections it has appointed, and the appeals it has made to the people; they should try to explain to the people what Bolshevism is, in a way that was never possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (exclusive, of course, of times of big strikes, when in Russia a *similar* apparatus for wide-spread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do this in Western Europe and in America, extremely difficult, but it can and must be done, for the objectives of communism cannot be achieved without effort. We must work to accomplish *practical* tasks, ever more varied and ever more closely connected with all branches of social life, *winning* branch after branch, and sphere after sphere *from the bourgeoisie*.

In Great Britain, further, the work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the armed forces and among the oppressed and underprivileged nationalities in their "own" state (Ireland, the colonies) must also be tackled in a new fashion (one that is not socialist, but communist; not reformist, but revolutionary). That is because, in the era of imperialism in general and especially today after a war that was a sore trial to the peoples and has quickly opened their eyes to the truth (i. e., the fact that tens of millions were killed and maimed for the sole purpose of deciding whether the British or the German robbers should plunder the largest number of countries), all these spheres of social life are heavily charged with inflammable material and are creating numerous causes of conflicts, crises and an intensification of the class struggle. We do not and cannot know which spark—of the innumerable sparks that are flying about in all countries as a result of the world economic and political crisis—will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of raising up the masses; we must, therefore, with our new and communist principles, set to work to stir up all and sundry, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, shall not be comprehensively prepared, shall not

be in possession of all the weapons and shall not prepare ourselves either to gain victory over the bourgeoisie (which arranged all aspects of social life—and has now disarranged them—in its bourgeois fashion), or to bring about the impending communist reorganisation of every sphere of life, following that victory.

Since the proletarian revolution in Russia and its victories on an international scale, expected neither by the bourgeoisie nor the philistines, the entire world has become different, and the bourgeoisie everywhere has become different too. It is terrified of "Bolshevism", exasperated by it almost to the point of frenzy, and for that very reason it is, on the one hand, precipitating the progress of events and, on the other, concentrating on the forcible suppression of Bolshevism, thereby weakening its own position in a number of other fields. In their tactics the Communists in all the advanced countries must take both these circumstances into account.

Written in April-May 1920

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*Collected Works*, Vol. 31,  
pp. 91-93, 98-100

## TO THE INDIAN REVOLUTIONARY ASSOCIATION<sup>120</sup>

I am glad to hear that the principles of self-determination and the liberation of oppressed nations from exploitation by foreign and native capitalists, proclaimed by the Workers' and Peasants' Republic, have met with such a ready response among progressive Indians, who are waging a heroic fight for freedom. The working masses of Russia are following with unflagging attention the awakening of the Indian workers and peasants. The organisation and discipline of the working people and their perseverance and solidarity with the working people of the world are an earnest of ultimate success. We welcome the close alliance of Moslem and non-Moslem elements. We sincerely want to see this alliance extended to all the toilers of the East. Only when the Indian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Persian, and Turkish workers and peasants join hands and march together in the common cause of liberation—only then will decisive victory over the exploiters be ensured. Long live a free Asia!

*Pravda* No. 108 and *Izvestia*  
No. 108, May 20, 1920

*Collected Works*, Vol. 31,  
p. 138

PRELIMINARY DRAFT THESES ON  
THE NATIONAL AND THE COLONIAL QUESTIONS

FOR THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE  
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In submitting for discussion by the Second Congress of the Communist International the following draft theses on the national and the colonial questions I would request all comrades, especially those who possess concrete information on any of these very complex problems, to let me have their opinions, amendments, addenda and concrete remarks *in the most concise form (no more than two or three pages)*, particularly on the following points:

- Austrian experience;
- Polish-Jewish and Ukrainian experience;
- Alsace-Lorraine and Belgium;
- Ireland;
- Danish-German, Italo-French and Italo-Slav relations;
- Balkan experience;
- Eastern peoples;
- The struggle against Pan-Islamism;
- Relations in the Caucasus;
- The Bashkir and Tatar Republics;
- Kirghizia;
- Turkestan, its experience;
- Negroes in America;
- Colonies;
- China—Korea—Japan.

June 5, 1920

N. Lenin

1) An abstract or formal posing of the problem of equality in general and national equality in particular is in the very nature of bourgeois democracy. Under the guise of the equality of the individual in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or legal equality of the property-owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited, thereby grossly deceiving the oppressed classes. On the plea

that all men are absolutely equal, the bourgeoisie is transforming the idea of equality, which is itself a reflection of relations in commodity production, into a weapon in its struggle against the abolition of classes. The real meaning of the demand for equality consists in its being a demand for the abolition of classes.

2) In conformity with its fundamental task of combating bourgeois democracy and exposing its falseness and hypocrisy, the Communist Party, as the avowed champion of the proletarian struggle to overthrow the bourgeois yoke, must base its policy, in the national question too, not on abstract and formal principles but, first, on a precise appraisal of the specific historical situation and, primarily, of economic conditions; second, on a clear distinction between the interests of the oppressed classes, of working and exploited people, and the general concept of national interests as a whole, which implies the interests of the ruling class; third, on an equally clear distinction between the oppressed, dependent and subject nations and the oppressing, exploiting and sovereign nations, in order to counter the bourgeois-democratic lies that play down this colonial and financial enslavement of the vast majority of the world's population by an insignificant minority of the richest and advanced capitalist countries, a feature characteristic of the era of finance capital and imperialism.

3) The imperialist war of 1914-18 has very clearly revealed to all nations and to the oppressed classes of the whole world the falseness of bourgeois-democratic phrases, by practically demonstrating that the Treaty of Versailles<sup>1 2 1</sup> of the celebrated "Western democracies" is an even more brutal and foul act of violence against weak nations than was the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk<sup>1 2 2</sup> of the German Junkers and the Kaiser. The League of Nations<sup>1 2 3</sup> and the entire postwar policy of the Entente reveal this truth with even greater clarity and distinctness. They are everywhere intensifying the revolutionary struggle both of the proletariat in the advanced countries and of the toiling masses in the colonial and dependent countries. They are hastening the collapse of the petty-bourgeois nationalist illusions that nations can live together in peace and equality under capitalism.

4) From these fundamental premises it follows that the

Communist International's entire policy on the national and the colonial questions should rest primarily on a closer union of the proletarians and the working masses of all nations and countries for a joint revolutionary struggle to overthrow the landowners and the bourgeoisie. This union alone will guarantee victory over capitalism, without which the abolition of national oppression and inequality is impossible.

5) The world political situation has now placed the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day. World political developments are of necessity concentrated on a single focus—the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Soviet Russian Republic, around which are inevitably grouped, on the one hand, the Soviet movements of the advanced workers in all countries, and, on the other, all the national liberation movements in the colonies and among the oppressed nationalities, who are learning from bitter experience that their only salvation lies in the Soviet system's victory over world imperialism.

6) Consequently, one cannot at present confine oneself to a bare recognition or proclamation of the need for closer union between the working people of the various nations; a policy must be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements. The form of this alliance should be determined by the degree of development of the communist movement in the proletariat of each country, or of the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement of the workers and peasants in backward countries or among backward nationalities.

7) Federation is a transitional form to the complete unity of the working people of different nations. The feasibility of federation has already been demonstrated in practice both by the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and other Soviet Republics (the Hungarian, Finnish<sup>124</sup> and Latvian<sup>125</sup> in the past, and the Azerbaijan and Ukrainian at present), and by the relations within the R.S.F.S.R. in respect of nationalities which formerly enjoyed neither statehood nor autonomy (e.g., the Bashkir and Tatar autonomous republics in the R.S.F.S.R., founded in 1919 and 1920 respectively).

8) In this respect, it is the task of the Communist Interna-

tional to further develop and also to study and test by experience these new federations, which are arising on the basis of the Soviet system and the Soviet movement. In recognising that federation is a transitional form to complete unity, it is necessary to strive for ever closer federal unity, bearing in mind, first, that the Soviet republics, surrounded as they are by the imperialist powers of the whole world—which from the military standpoint are immeasurably stronger—cannot possibly continue to exist without the closest alliance; second, that a close economic alliance between the Soviet republics is necessary, otherwise the productive forces which have been ruined by imperialism cannot be restored and the well-being of the working people cannot be ensured; third, that there is a tendency towards the creation of a single world economy, regulated by the proletariat of all nations as an integral whole and according to a common plan. This tendency has already revealed itself quite clearly under capitalism and is bound to be further developed and consummated under socialism.

9) The Communist International's national policy in the sphere of relations within the state cannot be restricted to the bare, formal, purely declaratory and actually non-committal recognition of the equality of nations to which the bourgeois democrats confine themselves—both those who frankly admit being such, and those who assume the name of socialists (such as the socialists of the Second International).

In all their propaganda and agitation—both within parliament and outside it—the Communist parties must consistently expose that constant violation of the equality of nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities which is to be seen in all capitalist countries, despite their “democratic” constitutions. It is also necessary, first, constantly to explain that only the Soviet system is capable of ensuring genuine equality of nations, by uniting first the proletarians and then the whole mass of the working population in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; and, second, that all Communist parties should render direct aid to the revolutionary movements among the dependent and underprivileged nations (for example, Ireland, the American Negroes, etc.) and in the colonies.

Without the latter condition, which is particularly impor-



tant, the struggle against the oppression of dependent nations and colonies, as well as recognition of their right to secede, are but a false signboard, as is evidenced by the parties of the Second International.

10) Recognition of internationalism in word, and its replacement in deed by petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism, in all propaganda, agitation and practical work, is very common, not only among the parties of the Second International, but also among those which have withdrawn from it, and often even among parties which now call themselves communist. The urgency of the struggle against this evil, against the most deep-rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices, looms ever larger with the mounting exigency of the task of converting the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national dictatorship (i. e., existing in a single country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i. e., a dictatorship of the proletariat involving at least several advanced countries, and capable of exercising a decisive influence upon world politics as a whole). Petty-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the mere recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more. Quite apart from the fact that this recognition is purely verbal, petty-bourgeois nationalism preserves national self-interest intact, whereas proletarian internationalism demands, first, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in any one country should be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world-wide scale, and, second, that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie should be able and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capital.

Thus, in countries that are already fully capitalist and have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and cardinal task.

11) With regard to the more backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate, it is particularly important to bear in mind:

first, that all Communist parties must assist the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in these countries, and that the duty of rendering the most active assistance

rests primarily with the workers of the country the backward nation is colonially or financially dependent on;

second, the need for a struggle against the clergy and other influential reactionary and medieval elements in backward countries;

third, the need to combat Pan-Islamism and similar trends, which strive to combine the liberation movement against European and American imperialism with an attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landowners, mullahs, etc.\*;

fourth, the need, in backward countries, to give special support to the peasant movement against the landowners, against landed proprietorship, and against all manifestations or survivals of feudalism, and to strive to lend the peasant movement the most revolutionary character by establishing the closest possible alliance between the West-European communist proletariat and the revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies, and in the backward countries generally. It is particularly necessary to exert every effort to apply the basic principles of the Soviet system in countries where pre-capitalist relations predominate—by setting up “working people’s Soviets”, etc.;

fifth, the need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries; the Communist International should support bourgeois-democratic national movements in colonial and backward countries only on condition that, in these countries, the elements of future proletarian parties, which will be communist not only in name, are brought together and trained to understand their special tasks, i. e., those of the struggle against the bourgeois-democratic movements within their own nations. The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, but should not merge with it, and should under all circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its most embryonic form;

sixth, the need constantly to explain and expose among the broadest working masses of all countries, and particular-

\* In the proofs Lenin inserted a brace opposite points 2 and 3 and wrote “2 and 3 to be united”.—Ed.

ly of the backward countries, the deception systematically practised by the imperialist powers, which, under the guise of politically independent states, set up states that are wholly dependent upon them economically, financially and militarily. Under present-day international conditions there is no salvation for dependent and weak nations except in a union of Soviet republics.

12) The age-old oppression of colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers has not only filled the working masses of the oppressed countries with animosity towards the oppressor nations, but has also aroused distrust in these nations in general, even in their proletariat. The despicable betrayal of socialism by the majority of the official leaders of this proletariat in 1914-19, when "defence of country" was used as a social-chauvinist cloak to conceal the defence of the "right" of their "own" bourgeoisie to oppress colonies and fleece financially dependent countries, was certain to enhance this perfectly legitimate distrust. On the other hand, the more backward the country, the stronger is the hold of small-scale agricultural production, patriarchalism and isolation, which inevitably lend particular strength and tenacity to the deepest of petty-bourgeois prejudices, i. e., to national egoism and national narrow-mindedness. These prejudices are bound to die out very slowly, for they can disappear only after imperialism and capitalism have disappeared in the advanced countries, and after the entire foundation of the backward countries' economic life has radically changed. It is therefore the duty of the class-conscious communist proletariat of all countries to regard with particular caution and attention the survivals of national sentiments in the countries and among nationalities which have been oppressed the longest; it is equally necessary to make certain concessions with a view to more rapidly overcoming this distrust and these prejudices. Complete victory over capitalism cannot be won unless the proletariat and, following it, the mass of working people in all countries and nations throughout the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity.

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## THE TERMS OF ADMISSION INTO THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

8. Parties in countries whose bourgeoisie possess colonies and oppress other nations must pursue a most well-defined and clear-cut policy in respect of colonies and oppressed nations. Any party wishing to join the Third International must ruthlessly expose the colonial machinations of the imperialists of its "own" country, must support—in deed, not merely in word—every colonial liberation movement, demand the expulsion of its compatriot imperialists from the colonies, inculcate in the hearts of the workers of its own country an attitude of true brotherhood with the working population of the colonies and the oppressed nations, and conduct systematic agitation among the armed forces against all oppression of the colonial peoples.

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pp. 144-51

REPORT  
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL  
AND THE COLONIAL QUESTIONS  
JULY 26 1926

Comrades, I shall confine myself to a brief introduction, after which Comrade Maring, who has been secretary to our commission, will give you a detailed account of the changes we have made in the theses. He will be followed by Comrade Roy, who has formulated the supplementary theses. Our commission have unanimously adopted both the preliminary theses, as amended, and the supplementary theses. We have thus reached complete unanimity on all major issues. I shall now make a few brief remarks.

First, what is the cardinal idea underlying our theses? It is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasise this distinction. In this age of imperialism, it is particularly important for the proletariat and the Communist International to establish the concrete economic facts and to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in all colonial and national problems.

The characteristic feature of imperialism consists in the whole world, as we now see, being divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, the latter possessing colossal wealth and powerful armed forces. The vast majority of the world's population, over a thousand million, perhaps even 1,250 million people, if we take the total population of the world as 1,750 million, in other words, about 70 per cent of the world's population, belong to the oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or are semi-colonies, as, for example, Persia, Turkey and China, or else, conquered by some big imperialist power, have become greatly dependent on that power by virtue of peace treaties. This idea of distinction, of dividing the nations into oppressor and oppressed, runs through the theses, not only the first theses published earlier over my signa-

ture, but also those submitted by Comrade Roy. The latter were framed chiefly from the standpoint of the situation in India and other big Asian countries oppressed by Britain. Herein lies their great importance to us.

The second basic idea in our theses is that, in the present world situation following the imperialist war, reciprocal relations between peoples and the world political system as a whole are determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world. The Communist parties, in civilised and backward countries alike, can pose and solve political problems correctly only if they make this postulate their starting-point.

Third, I should like especially to emphasise the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. This is a question that has given rise to certain differences. We have discussed whether it would be right or wrong, in principle and in theory, to state that the Communist International and the Communist parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. As a result of our discussion, we have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the "bourgeois-democratic" movement. It is beyond doubt that any national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, since the overwhelming mass of the population in the backward countries consists of peasants who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. It would be utopian to believe that proletarian parties in these backward countries, if indeed they can emerge in them, can pursue communist tactics and a communist policy, without establishing definite relations with the peasant movement and without giving it effective support. However, the objections have been raised that, if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries, since the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything in its power to implant a

reformist movement among the oppressed nations too. There has been a certain *rapprochement* between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often—perhaps even in most cases—the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, i. e., joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes. This was irrefutably proved in the commission, and we decided that the only correct attitude was to take this distinction into account and, in nearly all cases, substitute the term “national-revolutionary” for the term “bourgeois-democratic”. The significance of this change is that we, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organising in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited. If these conditions do not exist, the Communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie, to whom the heroes of the Second International also belong. Reformist parties already exist in the colonial countries, and in some cases their spokesmen call themselves Social-Democrats and socialists. The distinction I have referred to has been made in all the theses with the result, I think, that our view is now formulated much more precisely.

Next, I would like to make a remark on the subject of peasants’ Soviets. The Russian Communists’ practical activities in the former tsarist colonies, in such backward countries as Turkestan, etc., have confronted us with the question of how to apply the communist tactics and policy in pre-capitalist conditions. The preponderance of pre-capitalist relationships is still the main determining feature in these countries, so that there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement in them. There is practically no industrial proletariat in these countries. Nevertheless, we have assumed, we must assume, the role of leader even there. Experience has shown us that tremendous difficulties have to be surmounted in these countries. However, the practical results of our work have also shown that despite these difficulties we are in a position to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent

political action, even where a proletariat is practically non-existent. This work has been more difficult for us than it will be for comrades in the West-European countries, because in Russia the proletariat is engrossed in the work of state administration. It will readily be understood that peasants living in conditions of semi-feudal dependence can easily assimilate and give effect to the idea of Soviet organisation. It is also clear that the oppressed masses, those who are exploited, not only by merchant capital but also by the feudalists, and by a state based on feudalism, can apply this weapon, this type of organisation, in their conditions too. The idea of Soviet organisation is a simple one, and is applicable, not only to proletarian, but also to peasant feudal and semi-feudal relations. Our experience in this respect is not as yet very considerable. However, the debate in the commission, in which several representatives from colonial countries participated, demonstrated convincingly that the Communist International’s theses should point out that peasants’ Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a weapon which can be employed, not only in capitalist countries but also in countries with pre-capitalist relations, and that it is the absolute duty of Communist parties and of elements prepared to form Communist parties, everywhere to conduct propaganda in favour of peasants’ Soviets or of working people’s Soviets, this to include backward and colonial countries. Wherever conditions permit, they should at once make attempts to set up Soviets of the working people.

This opens up a very interesting and very important field for our practical work. So far our joint experience in this respect has not been extensive, but more and more data will gradually accumulate. It is unquestionable that the proletariat of the advanced countries can and should give help to the working masses of the backward countries, and that the backward countries can emerge from their present stage of development when the victorious proletariat of the Soviet Republics extends a helping hand to these masses and is in a position to give them support.

There was quite a lively debate on this question in the commission, not only in connection with the theses I signed, but still more in connection with Comrade Roy’s theses, which he will defend here, and certain amend-

ments to which were unanimously adopted.

The question was posed as follows: are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development. Not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and the backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to the pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

The necessary means for this cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by practical experience. It has, however, been definitely established that the idea of the Soviets is understood by the mass of the working people in even the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of a pre-capitalist social system, and that the Communist parties should immediately begin work in this direction in all parts of the world.

I would also like to emphasise the importance of revolutionary work by the Communist parties, not only in their own, but also in the colonial countries, and particularly among the troops employed by the exploiting nations to keep the colonial peoples in subjection.

Comrade Quelch of the British Socialist Party spoke of this in our commission. He said that the rank-and-file British worker would consider it treasonable to help the enslaved nations in their uprisings against British rule. True, the jingoist and chauvinist-minded labour aristocrats of Britain and America present a very great danger to socialism, and are a bulwark of the Second International.

Here we are confronted with the greatest treachery on the part of leaders and workers belonging to this bourgeois International. The colonial question has been discussed in the Second International as well. The Basle Manifesto is quite clear on this point, too. The parties of the Second International have pledged themselves to revolutionary action, but they have given no sign of genuine revolutionary work or of assistance to the exploited and dependent nations in their revolt against the oppressor nations. This, I think, applies also to most of the parties that have withdrawn from the Second International and wish to join the Third International. We must proclaim this publicly for all to hear, and it is irrefutable. We shall see if any attempt is made to deny it.

All these considerations have formed the basis of our resolutions, which undoubtedly are too lengthy but will nevertheless, I am sure, prove of use and will promote the development and organisation of genuine revolutionary work in connection with the national and the colonial questions. And that is our principal task.

*Vestnik utrogo kongressa  
Kommunisticheskogo Inter-  
natsionala (Bulletin of the Second  
Congress of the Communist  
International) No. 6, August 7, 1920*

*Collected Works, Vol. 31,  
pp. 240-45*

TO THE COMRADES COMMUNISTS  
OF AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA,  
ARMENIA, DAGHESTAN, AND THE  
MOUNTAINEER REPUBLIC

I send my warmest greetings to the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus, and should like to express the hope that their close alliance will serve as a model of national peace, unprecedented under the bourgeoisie and impossible under the capitalist system.

But important as national peace among the workers and peasants of the Caucasian nationalities is, the maintenance and development of the Soviet power, as the transition to socialism, are even more important. The task is difficult, but fully feasible. The most important thing for its successful fulfilment is that the Communists of the Transcaucasus should be fully alive to the *singularity* of their position, and of the position and conditions of the R.S.F.S.R.; that they should appreciate the need to refrain from copying our tactics, but thoughtfully vary them in adaptation to the differing concrete conditions.

The Soviet Republic of Russia had no outside political or military assistance. On the contrary, for years and years it fought the Entente military invasions and blockade.

The Soviet Republics of the Caucasus have had political and some military assistance from the R.S.F.S.R. This alone has made a vast difference.

Second, there is now no cause to fear any Entente invasion or military assistance to the Georgian, Azerbaijan, Armenian, Daghestan and mountaineer whiteguards. The Entente "burnt their fingers" in Russia and that will probably compel them to be more cautious for some time.

Third, the Caucasian Republics have an even more pronounced peasant character than Russia.

Fourth, Russia has been, and to a considerable extent still is, economically isolated from the advanced capitalist countries. The Caucasus is in a position to start trading and "living together" with the capitalist West sooner and with greater ease.

These are not all the differences, but they are sufficient to demonstrate the need for different tactics.

You will need to practise more moderation and caution, and show more readiness to make concessions to the petty bourgeois, the intelligentsia, and particularly the peasantry. You must make the swiftest, most intense and all possible economic use of the capitalist West through a policy of concessions and trade. Oil, manganese, coal (Tkvarcheli mines) and copper are some of your immense mineral resources. You have every possibility to develop an extensive policy of concessions and trade with foreign countries.

This must be done on a wide scale, with firmness, skill and circumspection, and it must be utilised to the utmost for improving the condition of the workers and peasants, and for enlisting the intelligentsia in the work of economic construction. Through trade with Italy, America and other countries, you must exert every effort to develop the productive forces of your rich land, your water resources and irrigation which is especially important as a means of advancing agriculture and livestock farming.

What the Republics of the Caucasus can and must do, as distinct from the R.S.F.S.R., is to effect a slower, more cautious and more systematic transition to socialism. That is what you must understand, and what you must be able to carry out, as distinct from our own tactics.

We fought to make the first breach in the wall of world capitalism. The breach has been made. We have maintained our positions in a fierce and superhuman war against the Whites, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who were supported by the Entente countries, their blockade and military assistance.

You, Comrades Communists of the Caucasus, have no need to force a breach. You must take advantage of the favourable international situation in 1921, and learn to build the new with greater caution and more method. In 1921, Europe and the world are not what they were in 1917 and 1918.

Do not copy our tactics, but analyse the reasons for their peculiar features, the conditions that gave rise to them, and their results; go beyond the letter, and apply the spirit, the essence and the lessons of the 1917-21 experience. You must make trade with the capitalist coun-

tries your economic foundation right away. The cost should be no object even if it means letting them have tens of millions' worth of valuable minerals.

You must make immediate efforts to improve the condition of the peasants and start on extensive electrification and irrigation projects. What you need most is irrigation, for more than anything else it will revive the area and regenerate it, bury the past and make the transition to socialism more certain.

I hope you will pardon my slipshod style: I have had to write the letter at very short notice, so as to send it along with Comrade Myasnikov. Once again I send my best greetings and wishes to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus.

Moscow, April 14, 1921

N. Lenin

*Pravda Gruzii* No. 55,  
May 8, 1921

*Collected Works*, Vol. 32,  
pp. 316-18

### THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, JUNE 22-JULY 12, 1921

From REPORT ON THE TACTICS OF THE R.C.P.  
JULY 5

...Here I would also like to emphasise the significance of *the movement in the colonies*. In this respect we see in all the old parties, in all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois labour parties affiliated to the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals<sup>127</sup>, survivals of the old sentimental views: they insist on their profound sympathy for oppressed colonial and semi-colonial peoples. The movement in the colonial countries is still regarded as an insignificant national and totally peaceful movement. But this is not so. It has undergone great change since the beginning of the twentieth century: millions and hundreds of millions, in fact the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe, are now coming forward as independent, active and revolutionary factors. It is perfectly clear that in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary part than we expect. It is important to emphasise the fact that, for the first time in our International, we have taken up the question of preparing for this struggle. Of course, there are many more difficulties in this enormous sphere than in any other, but at all events the movement is advancing. And in spite of the fact that the masses of toilers—the peasants in the colonial countries—are still backward, they will play a very important revolutionary part in the coming phases of the world revolution. (*Animated approval.*)

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Third Congress of the Commun-  
ist International* No. 17

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pp. 481-82



THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITIES  
OR "AUTONOMISATION"  
(Continued)

In my writings on the national question I have already said that an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation.

In respect of the second kind of nationalism we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it. It is sufficient to recall my Volga reminiscences of how non-Russians are treated; how the Poles are not called by any other name than *Polyachishka*, how the Tatar is nicknamed Prince, how the Ukrainians are always *Khokhols* and the Georgians and other Caucasian nationals always *Kapkasians*.

That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies), must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty-bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view.

What is important for the proletarian? For the proletarian it is not only important, it is absolutely essential that he should be assured that the non-Russians place the greatest possible trust in the proletarian class struggle. What is needed to ensure this? Not merely formal equality. In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack

of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past.

I think it is unnecessary to explain this to Bolsheviks, to Communists, in greater detail. And I think that in the present instance, as far as the Georgian nation is concerned, we have a typical case in which a genuinely proletarian attitude makes profound caution, thoughtfulness and a readiness to compromise a matter of necessity for us. The Georgian who is neglectful of this aspect of the question, or who carelessly flings about accusations of "nationalist-socialism" (whereas he himself is a real and true "nationalist-socialist", and even a vulgar Great-Russian bully), violates, in substance, the interests of proletarian class solidarity, for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; "offended" nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest—to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or great) nation.

*Lenin*

Taken down by M. V.  
December 31, 1922

*Collected Works*, Vol. 36,  
pp. 607-09

NOTES  
AND  
NAME INDEX

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A reference to *Iskra* No. 33 of February 1, 1903.

*Iskra* (The Spark) was the first all-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper; it was founded by Lenin in 1900 and played a decisive role in setting up the Marxist revolutionary party of the working class in Russia.

The first issue of *Iskra* was published in Leipzig in December 1900; subsequent issues were published in Munich; from July 1902 the paper was published in London, and from the spring of 1903 in Geneva.

The Editorial Board of *Iskra* consisted of V. I. Lenin, G. V. Plekhanov, Y. O. Martov, P. B. Axelrod, A. N. Potresov, and V. I. Zasulich. Lenin was in fact editor-in-chief and the leading figure in *Iskra*. He wrote articles for it on all the basic questions of Party organisation and the class struggle of the proletariat in Russia.

On the initiative and with the direct participation of Lenin, the *Iskra* Editorial Board drew up a draft programme of the Party (published in No. 21 of *Iskra*) and prepared the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in July and August 1903. A special Congress resolution noted *Iskra's* exceptional role in the struggle to set up the Party and adopted the newspaper as the central organ of the R.S.D.L.P. The Congress approved an editorial board consisting of Lenin, Plekhanov, and Martov. Despite the Congress decision, Martov, who insisted that the former six editors should remain, refused to participate, and Nos. 46-51 of *Iskra* were edited by Lenin and Plekhanov.

Later Plekhanov went over to the Menshevik position and demanded that all the former Menshevik editors be reinstated in the Editorial Board of *Iskra*, although they had been rejected by the Congress. Lenin could not agree to this and on October 19 (November 1), 1903, he resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board. He was co-opted to the Central Committee on which he started a struggle against the Menshevik opportunists.

Issue No. 52 of *Iskra* was edited by Plekhanov alone. On November 13 (26), 1903, Plekhanov, on his own initiative and in violation of the Congress decision, co-opted all the former Menshevik editors to the Editorial Board. Beginning with issue No. 52, the Mensheviks turned *Iskra* into their own organ.

<sup>2</sup> Polish Socialist Party, or P.S.P. (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna)—a reformist nationalist party founded in 1892. Adopting the slogan of struggle for an independent Poland, the P.S.P., led by Pilsudski and his adherents, carried on separatist, nationalist propaganda among the Polish workers, striving to distract them from the common struggle

with the Russian workers against the autocracy and capitalism.

In 1906 the P.S.P. split into a Lewica (Left-wing) P.S.P. and a Right-wing, chauvinist P.S.P., known as the "revolutionary faction".

During the First World War (1914-18) a large section of the Lewica P.S.P. took up an internationalist position, and in December 1918 it merged with the Social-Democrats of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. The two united parties formed the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (the name of the Communist Party of Poland until 1925).

Throughout the First World War the Right-wing P.S.P. continued its national-chauvinist policy. In Galicia it formed Polish legions which fought on the side of the Austro-German imperialists. p.32

<sup>3</sup> *Przedświt* (Dawn)—a political magazine published by a group of Polish socialists from 1881; in 1884 it became the organ of the first Polish workers' party, the Proletariat Party. From 1892 it was controlled by Right-wing socialist and nationalist elements, though it also published Marxist articles from time to time. From 1900 to 1905 it was the theoretical and debating organ of the Polish Socialist Party. The magazine was published again from 1907 to 1920 with intervals in 1915 and 1917; from 1907—as the organ of the Right-wing P.S.P. (the so-called P.S.P.—"revolutionary faction") and in 1918-20—as the organ of the P.S.P. From 1881 to 1901 the magazine was published abroad, and after that in Poland. p.32

<sup>4</sup> *Socialist-Revolutionary Party* (S.R.s)—a petty-bourgeois political party in Russia. The Socialist-Revolutionaries did not see the class distinctions between the proletariat and the small proprietor. They glossed over the class differentiation and contradictions within the peasantry and rejected the proletariat's leading role in the revolution.

The agrarian programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries envisaged the abolition of private landownership and the transfer of the land to peasant communes on the basis of equalitarian tenure, and the development of co-operatives. The First World War (1914-18) saw most Socialist-Revolutionaries adopt social-chauvinist views.

During the years of foreign military intervention and the Civil War (1918-20) the Socialist-Revolutionaries carried on counter-revolutionary subversive activities, vigorously supported the interventionists and White Guards, took part in counter-revolutionary plots, and organised terrorist acts against Soviet statesmen and Communist Party leaders. After the Civil War, they continued their activities against the Soviet state within the country and among White Guard émigrés.

*Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* (Revolutionary Russia)—an illegal newspaper of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. It began publications in late 1900 in Russia; from January 1902 to December 1905 it was published in Geneva as the official organ of the party of Socialist-Revolutionaries. p.33

<sup>5</sup> *Die Neue Zeit* (New Times)—the theoretical journal of the German Social-Democratic Party. Appeared in Stuttgart from 1883 to 1923. Some of the writings of K. Marx and F. Engels were first pub-

lished in *Die Neue Zeit*. Engels gave advice to the editors of *Die Neue Zeit* and frequently criticised them for departing from Marxism. In the late 1890s, after Engels' death, the journal started publishing articles by revisionists. During the First World War (1914-18) it adopted a Centrist position and actually supported the social-chauvinists. p.35

<sup>6</sup> *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (New Rhenish Gazette) came out in Cologne from June 1, 1848 to May 19, 1849 under the direction of Marx and Engels, Marx being editor-in-chief. As Lenin put it, the newspaper was "the finest and unsurpassed organ of the revolutionary proletariat" (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 81). Despite police harassment and persecution, *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* championed the interests of revolutionary democracy and the proletariat.

Marx's deportation by the Prussian Government in May 1849 and repressive measures against the other editors led to the paper ceasing publication. p.35

<sup>7</sup> *The Frankfurt Parliament*—the Frankfurt National Assembly—an all-Germany National Assembly convened after the March Revolution of 1848 in Germany. Its main objective was to put an end to political disunity and draw up an all-Germany Constitution. Owing to the cowardice and vacillation of the liberal majority of the National Assembly and the irresolution and inconsistency of the petty-bourgeois Left wing, however, the Assembly did nothing to ease the condition of the workers and peasants; it did not support the national liberation movement in Poland and Bohemia and approved of the policy of oppression pursued by Austria and Prussia towards the enslaved peoples. In June 1849 the Assembly was dissolved by Württemberg troops. p.35

<sup>8</sup> F. Engels, "The Frankfurt Assembly Debates the Polish Question", K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 374, 351-52. p.35

<sup>9</sup> *The Bund* (*The General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia*) was formed by a constituent assembly of Jewish Social-Democratic groups held in Vilno in 1897; it was an association mainly of semi-proletarian Jewish artisans in the Western regions of Russia. The Bund joined the R.S.D.L.P. at the latter's First Congress (1898) "as an autonomous organisation, independent only as far as questions affecting the Jewish proletariat are concerned". After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1903) rejected the Bund's demand that it be recognised as the only representative of the Jewish proletariat, the Bund left the Party. In 1906 the Bund again joined the R.S.D.L.P. on the basis of a resolution of the Fourth (Unity) Congress.

Within the R.S.D.L.P. the Bundists persistently supported the opportunist wing of the Party (the Economists, the Mensheviks, the liquidators) and struggled against the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism. In 1917 the Bund supported the bourgeois Provisional Government and

fought on the side of the enemies of the October Socialist Revolution. In the years of foreign military intervention and civil war (1918-20) the Bund leadership joined forces with the counter-revolution. At the same time, a change was taking place among the rank and file of the Bund in favour of co-operating with Soviet power. In March 1921 the Bund decided to dissolve itself and some of its members entered the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the basis of the rules of admission.

p.40

<sup>10</sup> This document is the preface by the editorial board of the newspaper *Proletary*—the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P.—to the pamphlet "Report on the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party", published in Yiddish in 1905.

The pamphlet contained the main resolutions of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., previously published in *Proletary*, No. 1, May 27 (14), 1905. The preface was written by Lenin.

*Proletary* (The Proletarian)—an illegal Bolshevik newspaper which appeared from August 21 (September 3), 1906 to November 28 (December 11), 1909 and was edited by Lenin. The newspaper was published first in Russia and later abroad. As the Central Organ of the Bolsheviks, the newspaper gave prominence to questions of tactics and general politics; it published reports on the activities of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., the decisions of its conferences and plenary meetings and other documents.

p.42

<sup>11</sup> The *Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* was held in London between April 12 and 27 (April 25 and May 10), 1905. The Congress was convened by the Bolsheviks and directed by Lenin. The Mensheviks refused to attend it and met separately in Geneva.

The Congress outlined the strategy of the Party in the bourgeois-democratic revolution: the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry would become the leader of the revolution, and having isolated the bourgeoisie would fight for the victory of the revolution, for the overthrow of the autocracy and the establishment of a democratic republic, and for the abolition of all vestiges of serfdom. The Congress recognised the organisation of an armed uprising as the chief and most urgent task of the Party. The Congress pointed out that the victory of an armed popular uprising must be followed by the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government which would suppress counter-revolutionary resistance, carry out the minimum-programme of the R.S.D.L.P. and create conditions for the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

The Third Congress was an event of historic importance. It was the first Bolshevik Congress. It armed the Party and the working class with a strategic and tactical plan for the victory of the democratic revolution.

p.42

<sup>12</sup> The *Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* was held between July 17 (30) and August 10 (23), 1903 first in Brussels and then in London.

The most important issues were the adoption of the Party programme and its Rules and the election of the Party's leading bodies. Lenin and his followers waged an uncompromising struggle against the opportunists.

The Congress rejected all the attempts of the opportunists to amend the draft programme drawn up by the *Iskra* editorial board and unanimously (with one abstention) adopted the Party programme: the minimum-programme dealt with the immediate aims of the proletariat in the forthcoming bourgeois-democratic revolution; and the maximum-programme dealt with the ultimate aim, the victory of a socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The adoption of the revolutionary Marxist programme was a great victory for the Lenin-*Iskra*-ist trend which was consolidated by the Congress decision to recognise *Iskra* as the central organ of the Party.

The Congress also adopted the Party Rules elaborated by Lenin with the exception of the first paragraph, drafted by Martov, which proposed regular personal assistance to the Party under the guidance of one of its organisations. Lenin criticised this wording which made it easy for all kinds of unstable elements to get into the Party. Lenin proposed amending the first paragraph to the effect that a Party member should recognise the Party programme and support the Party financially as well as personally participating in one of its organisations.

The Congress saw the split between the adherents of the *Iskra*-ist trend, the Leninists, and the so-called "mild" *Iskra*-ists, the Martovites. Lenin and his supporters obtained a majority in the elections to the leading organs of the Party (C.C. and C.O.) and began to be called the Bolsheviks (from the Russian *bolshinstvo* meaning majority) while the Martovites, who obtained a minority of votes became known as the Mensheviks (from the Russian *menshinstvo*—minority).

p.43

<sup>13</sup> The *Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* took place in Stockholm from April 10 to 25 (April 23 to May 8), 1906. Before the Congress Lenin drafted the Congress resolutions on all the main questions of the revolution—the tactical line of the Bolsheviks.

The Mensheviks had a majority at the Congress. Many Bolshevik organisations which had headed the armed uprising had been smashed and were unable to send delegates to the Congress. This explains the Menshevik character of most of its decisions. The most controversial question was the agrarian programme.

Lenin's agrarian programme was basically the demand for confiscation of all landed estates and nationalisation of the land, that is, the abolition of private ownership of land and the handing over of all land to the State.

The Mensheviks advocated a programme of municipalisation of the land. According to this programme the landed estates were to be placed at the disposal of the local self-government bodies (municipalities), from which the peasants were to rent the land.

The Congress is known as the "Unity" Congress, but only an apparent unity of the R.S.D.L.P. was effected at it. In fact, the Bolsheviks

and the Mensheviks each retained their own views and platforms on the vital issues of the revolution. They were really two different parties. According to Lenin, an important ideological result of the Congress was that the line of demarcation between the Right wing and the Left wing in Social Democracy became clearer and more definite.

Immediately after the Congress Lenin, on behalf of the Bolshevik delegates, wrote an appeal to the Party containing a fundamental criticism of the Menshevik decisions adopted by the Fourth Congress despite the protests of the Bolsheviks. p.46

<sup>14</sup> The *International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart* (The Seventh Congress of the Second International) was held from August 18 to 24, 1907. The meetings with the representatives of the Left, organised by Lenin, were the first step to unite revolutionary Marxists in the international socialist movement in the age of imperialism.

The Congress conducted its main work in committees set up to draft resolutions for the plenary meetings. Lenin worked on the Militarism and International Conflicts Committee. During the discussion of Bebel's draft resolution Lenin suggested amendments which received the support of the representatives of the Polish Social-Democrats and imbued the resolution with the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. The resolution contained the following fundamental proposition: "Should the war break out, they (the working class of different countries and its parliamentary representatives.—Ed.) must ... take advantage by all possible means of the economic and political crisis caused by the war to stir up the masses and accelerate the downfall of capitalist class domination" (*Proletary*, No. 17, October 20, 1907). This statement was adopted by the Copenhagen Congress in 1910 and included in the resolution of the Basle Congress of 1912.

The fact that the resolution on Militarism and International Conflicts was adopted, signified an important victory for the revolutionary wing over the opportunist wing in the international working-class movement.

A sharp struggle developed at the Congress on the colonial question as well. Despite the protests of the minority, the opportunist majority of the committee headed by Van Kol, a Dutch "Socialist" proposed a draft resolution which said that the Congress must not condemn all colonial policy in principle, because colonial policy could play a civilising role under socialism. Only thanks to the efforts of Russian, Polish and a small number of German, French and English socialists, as well as all the socialists in small countries which did not have colonies, the committee resolution was rejected and a radically amended form of it was adopted. The final Congress resolution on the colonial question openly and unequivocally condemned all colonial policy.

Giving a general assessment of the Congress decisions, Lenin wrote: "On the whole, the Stuttgart Congress brought into sharp contrast the opportunist and revolutionary wings of the international Social-Democratic movement on a number of cardinal issues and decided these issues in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 81). p.48

<sup>15</sup> *Proletary* No. 17 which published this article, also carried the resolutions of the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart. p.48

<sup>16</sup> The *First Duma* (The *Witte Duma*)—was convened on April 27 (May 10), 1906, under the regulations drawn up by S. Y. Witte, Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The October All-Russia political strike of 1905 compelled the tsar to issue the Manifesto of October 17, 1905 which promised the convocation of a legislative State Duma.

Elections to the First Duma were held in February-March, 1906. The Bolsheviks called on the masses to boycott the Duma. Although it considerably undermined the Duma's prestige and weakened belief in it among the population, the boycott failed. Lenin set a new task, which consisted of utilising the Duma in revolutionary propaganda and exposing it as a crude imitation of a popular representative assembly.

More than a third of the seats in the Duma were held by Constitutional-Democrats.

Among other matters, the State Duma discussed at its sittings such issues as personal inviolability, abolition of capital punishment, freedom of conscience and assembly, and civil equality. However, the bills on these matters, most of which were proposed by the Constitutional-Democrats, were essentially "repressive Bills against free speech, against freedom of assembly, and against the other good things". (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 88).

As the Duma was quite weak and its decisions were generally half-hearted, it failed to live up to the expectations of the government and on July 8 (21), 1906 it was dissolved. p.51

<sup>17</sup> *Young-Turks*—the European name given to the members of the Turkish bourgeois-landlord nationalist party, known as the Committee of Union and Progress, founded in 1889 in Istanbul. They sought to limit the absolute power of the Sultan, to convert the feudal empire into a bourgeois constitutional monarchy, and to strengthen the role of the Turkish bourgeoisie in the economic and political life of the country. The Young Turk government, which was brought to power in July, 1908 by a bourgeois revolution accomplished by members of the ruling strata and the army, retained the monarchy and pursued reactionary policies. It declared itself dissolved after Turkey's military defeat in the First World War (in the autumn of 1918). p.52

<sup>18</sup> The *Constitutional-Democratic Party* (Cadets)—was the leading party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia. Founded in October 1905, its membership was made up of representatives of the bourgeoisie, Zemstvo leaders of the landowning class, and bourgeois intellectuals.

To deceive the working people, the Cadets hypocritically called themselves "the party of the people's freedom", while in actual fact they did not go beyond the demand for a constitutional monarchy. When the October Socialist Revolution was victorious, the Cadets

became irreconcilable enemies of the Soviets and took part in all armed counter-revolutionary acts and campaigns by the interventionists. They continued their anti-Soviet counter-revolutionary activities when they fled abroad after the rout of the interventionists and White Guards.

p.53

19 *Justice*—a weekly published in London from January 1884 to the beginning of 1925; the central organ of the Social Democratic Federation; in 1911 it became the organ of the British Socialist Party. From February 1925 to December 1933 it was published under the title *Social Democrat*.

p.53

20 *L'Humanité*—a daily founded in 1904 as the organ of the French Socialist Party. The newspaper hailed the beginning of the revolution in Russia in 1905 and organised the collection of donations in support of the Russian revolution. During the First World War (1914-18) the paper was controlled by the extreme Right wing of the French Socialist Party and took a chauvinist stand. In 1918-20, the paper attacked the imperialist policy of the French Government which sent its armed forces against the Soviet Republic.

p.55

21 The *Second Empire*—the reign of the French Emperor Napoleon III (December 2, 1852 to September 4, 1870). The September Revolution of 1870 put an end to the Second Empire.

p.59

22 A reference to the *First International* (International Working Men's Association)—the first international mass organisation of the proletariat, founded on September 28, 1864 at an international workers' meeting convened in London by English and French workers. The foundation of the First International was the result of many years of persistent struggle waged by Marx and Engels to establish a revolutionary party of the working class. Marx was the organiser and leader of the International and also the author of its *Inaugural Address*, the Rules and other programme and tactical documents. Lenin said that the First International "laid the foundation of an international organisation of the workers for the preparation of their revolutionary attack on capital," and "laid the foundation of the proletarian international struggle for socialism" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 306, 307).

When the Paris Commune was defeated, the working class was faced with the problem of creating mass parties based on the principles advanced by the First International in the different countries. In 1876 the First International was officially disbanded at a conference in Philadelphia.

p.59

23 The *Theses on the National Question* were written by Lenin for his lectures on the national question delivered on July 9, 10, 11 and 13 (New Style), 1913 in the Swiss towns of Zurich, Geneva, Lausanne and Berne. These lectures were attended not only by the Bolsheviks but by members of émigré groups of other Socialist parties.

p.71

24 *Octobrists*—members of the *Union of October Seventeenth*—a party that was formed after the publication of the tsar's Manifesto of October 17, 1905. It was a counter-revolutionary party representing the big bourgeoisie and big capitalist farmers. The Octobrists gave full support to the domestic and foreign policy of the tsarist government.

p.72

25 *Progressists*—a political group of the Russian liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which during the elections to the Duma and within the Duma, attempted to unite elements of the various bourgeois-landlord parties and groups under the flag of "non-partisanship".

In November 1912 the Progressists formed an independent political party with the following programme: a moderate constitution with restricted electoral qualifications, petty reforms, a government accountable to the Duma, and suppression of the revolutionary movement. Ideologically Progressists were a cross between the Octobrists and Cadets. Lenin described the programme of the Progressist Party as being a national-liberal programme. After the October Socialist Revolution the Progressist Party waged an active struggle against the Soviet government.

p.72

26 A reference to the resolution adopted at the Congress of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party held in Brünn (Austria) from September 24 to 29, 1899. The national question was the main item on the agenda. Two resolutions expressing different points of view were submitted to the Congress: 1) the resolution of the Party's Central Committee supporting the idea of the territorial autonomy of nations, and 2) the resolution of the Committee of the South-Slav Social-Democratic Party supporting the idea of extraterritorial cultural-national autonomy.

The Congress unanimously rejected the programme of cultural-national autonomy, and adopted a compromise resolution recognising national autonomy within the boundaries of the Austrian state.

p.75

27 "Federation of the worst type"—the wording used in the resolutions of the Sixth (Prague) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. of 1912 to describe the relations with the national Social-Democratic organisations within the R.S.D.L.P. from the Fourth (Unity) Congress, when the "non-Russians" worked "in total isolation from Russian organisations", which had a very harmful effect on the work of the R.S.D.L.P.

p.77

28 *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn)—a Menshevik liquidator monthly published legally in St. Petersburg from January, 1910 to September, 1914. It served as a rallying centre for the liquidationist forces in Russia.

p.77

29 Lenin is referring to the decision of the August conference of the liquidators held in Vienna in August 1912, which together with the Programme of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted the opportunist slogan of "cul-



tural-national autonomy".

*Liquidators*—adherents of an opportunist trend in the R.S.D.L.P. that appeared in 1907. Being the Right wing of the Mensheviks, they demanded the dissolution of the illegal revolutionary party of the proletariat and the creation of a legal reformist party. They opposed the Programme of the R.S.D.L.P. The Sixth Prague Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. which took place in January, 1912 expelled them from the Party.

p.77

<sup>30</sup> *Russkaya Molva* (Russian Tidings)—a bourgeois daily, organ of the Progressists, a bourgeois-landlord party. The paper was published in St. Petersburg from December 9 (22), 1912 to August 20 (September 2), 1913.

p.78

<sup>31</sup> *Narodowa Demokracja* (National Democracy)—the chief reactionary, nationalist party of the Polish landowners and bourgeoisie, closely linked with the Catholic Church. It came into being in 1897. By advancing the slogans of "class harmony" and "national interests", the N.D.'s sought to gain influence over the masses and draw them into their reactionary policy. During the revolution of 1905-07 they sought to make a deal with tsarism to secure the autonomy of the Kingdom of Poland, and openly supported it in its struggle against the revolution by "every means, including informing, lock-outs and assassination" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 197). Bitter enemies of the October Socialist Revolution and the Soviet state though they were, the N.D.'s, in keeping with their traditional anti-German attitude, did not always give whole-hearted support to the adventurist anti-Soviet foreign policy pursued by the Pilsudski clique which ruled Poland from 1926.

p.78

<sup>32</sup> A reference to segregation of schools according to nationality, one of the basic demands of the bourgeois-nationalist programme for "cultural-national autonomy".

p.78

<sup>33</sup> The *Joint Conference of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. and Party Officials* (for purposes of secrecy called "the Summer Conference") was held from September 23 to October 1 (October 6 to 14), 1913 in the village of Poronin (near Cracow), where Lenin was residing at the time.

One of the main items on the Conference agenda was the national question, which occupied a prominent place among other problems pertaining to Russia's social life.

Basing itself on the Party Programme the Conference resolutely voted down the opportunist demand for "cultural-national autonomy" proposed by the Mensheviks and Bundists, and adopted programme propositions on the national question as worked out by Lenin. The Conference confirmed that the main slogan of the Party on the national question was the right of nations to self-determination, i.e., the right of secession and formation of an independent state, that must be decided in each individual case in accordance with the interests of social development as a whole and with the interests of the

proletarian class struggle for socialism. Lenin considered the resolution on the national question, adopted by the Conference, to be a programme declaration of the Party.

p.79

<sup>34</sup> *Pravda* (The Truth)—a Bolshevik legal daily. The first issue appeared in St. Petersburg on April 22 (May 5), 1912.

The decision on the need to publish a mass daily newspaper of the working class was adopted at the Sixth (Prague) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (1912).

Lenin directed the work of the paper, writing an article almost daily, he gave advice to its editors and did his utmost to ensure that the material published in it was written in a militant revolutionary spirit.

*Pravda* kept the Party in daily contact with the broad mass of the workers. The paper had a veritable army of worker correspondents. It published more than 17,000 items written by workers in a little over two years.

A great deal of the Party's organisational work was concentrated in the *Pravda* editorial offices. Here meetings were arranged with representatives of local Party nuclei; reports were received of Party activities in the mills and factories, and the instructions from the St. Petersburg Committee and the Central Committee of the Party were published.

*Pravda* was subjected to constant police harassment and persecution. On July 8 (21), 1914 it was closed down.

Publication of *Pravda* was resumed only after the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917, on March 5 (18), 1917, as the organ of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee and St. Petersburg Committee. From July to October 1917 *Pravda* was persecuted by the bourgeois Provisional Government and changed its name. After the October Socialist Revolution it was published from October 27 (November 9), 1917 as the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P.

p.82

<sup>35</sup> *Prosveshcheniye* (Enlightenment)—a Bolshevik theoretical monthly published legally in St. Petersburg from December 1911 to June 1914. Lenin directed the publication from Paris and then Cracow and Poronin, edited articles and corresponded regularly with the editorial staff.

On the eve of the First World War the journal was suppressed by the tsarist government. Publication was resumed in the autumn of 1917 but only one double issue appeared.

p.84

<sup>36</sup> *Narodism*—a petty-bourgeois trend in the Russian revolutionary movement which arose in the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century. The Narodniks campaigned for the abolition of the autocracy and the transfer of landed estates to the peasants. They regarded themselves as socialists, but their socialism was utopian.

They denied that in accordance with the laws of capitalism, capitalist relations were developing in Russia and, consequently, considered the peasantry, not the proletariat, to be the chief revolutionary force; they regarded the village commune as an embryonic form of socialism. The Narodniks denied the role of the masses in historical

development and believed that history was made by heroes, outstanding individuals, whom they contrasted with the "passive" crowd. With the object of rousing the peasantry to struggle against absolutism, the Narodniks went to the villages, "among the people (*narod*)" (hence their name), but found no support there.

Narodism evolved through several stages, from revolutionary democracy to liberalism.

In the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century the Narodniks adopted a conciliatory policy towards tsarism, supported the interests of the kulaks and conducted a struggle against Marxism. p.84

<sup>37</sup> The article "Critical Remarks on the National Question" was written by Lenin in October-December 1913 and published the same year in the Bolshevik legal journal *Prosveshcheniye* Nos. 10, 11, and 12.

The article was preceded by lectures on the national question which Lenin delivered in a number of Swiss cities—Zurich, Geneva, Lausanne and Berne—in the summer of 1913.

In the autumn of 1913 Lenin made a detailed report on the national question at the Poronin Conference of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. with Party workers. The resolution on the report drafted by Lenin was adopted. p. 86

<sup>38</sup> *Zeit* (Time)—a weekly organ of the Bund published in Yiddish in St. Petersburg from December 20, 1912 (January 2, 1913) to May 5 (18), 1914. p.86

<sup>39</sup> *Dzvin* (The Bell)—a monthly legal nationalist journal of Menshevik trend, published in Ukrainian in Kiev from January 1913 to the middle of 1914; 18 issues in all. At the beginning of the First World War (1914-18) the journal was closed down. p.86

<sup>40</sup> *Russkoye Slovo* (Russian Word)—a daily published in Moscow from 1895. Formally non-party, the paper defended the interests of the Russian bourgeoisie from a moderate-liberal platform.

In November 1917 it was closed down for carrying slanderous anti-Soviet reports. From January 1918, it appeared for a time under the name of *Novoye Slovo* (New Word) and *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word). It was finally closed down in July 1918. p.87

<sup>41</sup> Lenin has in mind *Zemstvos*—the so-called local self-government bodies set up in 1864 in the central gubernias of tsarist Russia and dominated by the nobility. Their competence was limited to purely local economic affairs (hospital and road building, statistics, insurance). They functioned under the control of the governors of the gubernias and the Ministry of the Interior, which could block any decisions the government found undesirable. p.89

<sup>42</sup> The *village* (land) *commune* in Russia—the communal form of peasant use of the land characterised by compulsory crop rotation and jointly owned woods and pastures. Its principal features were collec-

tive responsibility, the periodical redistribution of the land with no right to refuse the allotment given, and prohibition of its purchase and sale.

The Russian village commune dates back to ancient times, and over the centuries gradually became one of the mainstays of feudalism in Russia. The landowners and the tsarist government used the village commune to intensify feudal oppression and to extort land redemption payments and taxes from the people.

In 1906 the tsarist minister Stolypin issued a law favouring the kulaks that allowed peasants to leave the commune and to sell their allotments. In the nine years following the adoption of the law, which provided the basis for the official abolition of the village commune system and intensified differentiation among the peasantry, over two million peasant families withdrew from the communes. p.89

<sup>43</sup> J.S.L.P. (Jewish Socialist Labour Party)—a petty-bourgeois nationalist organisation founded in 1906. Its programme was based on the demand for national autonomy for the Jews—the creation of extra-territorial Jewish parliaments (*seims*) authorised to settle questions concerning the political organisation of Jews in Russia. The J.S.L.P. stood close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries with whom it waged a struggle against the R.S.D.L.P. p.102

<sup>44</sup> The *Beilis case*—a trial engineered by the tsarist government in Kiev in 1913. Beilis, a Jew, was falsely accused of having murdered a Christian boy called Yushchinsky for ritual purposes (in fact, the murder was organised by the Black Hundreds—members of the monarchist bands set up to wage struggle against the revolutionary movement, who staged anti-Jewish pogroms). The aim of this frame-up was to fan anti-Semitism and incite pogroms so as to divert the masses from the mounting revolutionary movement. The trial aroused great public feeling. Workers' protest demonstrations were held in a number of cities. Beilis was acquitted. p.104

<sup>45</sup> *Luch* (The Ray)—a legal daily of the Menshevik liquidators published in St. Petersburg from September 16 (29), 1912 to July 5 (18), 1913. 237 issues in all. The newspaper was maintained chiefly by donations from the liberals. The liquidators used its columns to oppose the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks, advocate the opportunist slogan of an "open party", attack the revolutionary mass strikes of the workers, and attempted to revise the most important points of the Party Programme. p.105

<sup>46</sup> Lenin is referring to Stalin's article "Marxism and the National Question" published in the legal Bolshevik journal *Prosveshcheniye*, Nos. 3, 4 and 5 for 1913 under the title "The National Question and Social Democracy". Chapter 4 of Stalin's article quotes the text of the national programme adopted at the Brünn Congress of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party. p.106

<sup>47</sup> *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* (New Workers' Paper) — a daily newspaper of the Menshevik liquidators published in St. Petersburg instead of *Zhivaya Zhizn* (*Living Life*) from August 8 (21), 1913 to January 23 (February 5), 1914. p.106

<sup>48</sup> *Przegląd Socjaldemokratyczny* (Social-Democratic Review) — a journal published by the Polish Social-Democrats in close co-operation with Rosa Luxemburg in Cracow from 1902 to 1904 and from 1908 to 1910. p.112

<sup>49</sup> *Vestnik Yevropy* (Messenger of Europe) — a monthly historico-political and literary magazine of a bourgeois-liberal trend that came out in St. Petersburg from 1866 to 1918. The magazine published articles attacking the revolutionary Marxists. p.115

<sup>50</sup> Lenin is referring to an article he was planning on "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination". The article was written in February-May 1914 and published in April-June in the journal *Prosveshcheniye* Nos. 4, 5 and 6. p.117

<sup>51</sup> The *National Equality Bill* (official title "Bill for the Abolition of All Disabilities of the Jews and of All Restrictions on the Grounds of Origin or Nationality") was drafted by Lenin for the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Fourth Duma. The Bill was to have been introduced in the Duma, apparently in connection with the discussion of the Ministry of the Interior's budget.

In publishing this Bill on behalf of the R.S.D.L.P. group, Lenin considered it a point of honour on the part of the Russian workers to support it with thousands of signatures and declarations. p.118

<sup>52</sup> The *Fourth State Duma* began its work on November 15(28), 1912. The Duma elections were held in the autumn of 1912 on the basis of the anti-democratic electoral law of June 3(16), 1907.

Among the deputies to the Duma were 185 Nationalists and Rightists, 98 Octobrists, 59 Cadets, 69 Progressists and bourgeois nationalists, 10 Trudoviks and 14 Social Democrats. The Social-Democratic group in the Fourth Duma included six Bolsheviks. They represented six major industrial gubernias which accounted for four-fifths of the proletariat of Russia.

The work of the Bolshevik deputies was daily guided by Lenin. At the beginning of the First World War (1914-18) the Bolshevik faction refused to vote for war credits and launched revolutionary propaganda in the masses. In November 1914 the Bolshevik deputies of the Duma were arrested and brought to trial.

On February 26 (March 11), 1917 the tsar announced the dissolution of the Fourth State Duma. But the members of the Duma, who dared not protest openly, decided to hold unofficial sessions.

Under pressure from the revolutionary masses, the bourgeois Provisional Government was compelled to issue an act which dissolved the Duma on October 6 (19), 1917. p.118

<sup>53</sup> The *Bill on the Equality of Nations and the Safeguarding of the Rights of National Minorities* was drafted by Lenin for presentation to the Fourth Duma by the Bolshevik group.

Lenin attached special importance to the introduction of this Bill in the Duma, trying in this way to "give a popular explanation of the stupidity of cultural-national autonomy and kill the supporters of this stupidity for good" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 143).

The Bill was not introduced. p.120

<sup>54</sup> *Council of the United Nobility* — a counter-revolutionary organisation of feudal landlords founded in May 1906 at the first congress of delegates of the gubernia societies of the nobility. It functioned till October 1917. Its main objective was to defend the autocratic system, the big landed estates and the privileges of the nobility. Lenin called it the "council of united serf-owners". p.126

<sup>55</sup> *Decembrists* — Russian revolutionary noblemen who in December 1825 rose in revolt against the autocracy and the serf-owning system. p.126

<sup>56</sup> A quotation from Chernyshevsky's novel *The Prologue*. p. 126

<sup>57</sup> Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1969, S. 527. p.127

<sup>58</sup> This document was written in connection with the preparation of the *First International Socialist Conference* which was convened on the initiative of the Italian and Swiss socialists. Lenin did a great deal of preparatory work for the conference, carrying on an extensive correspondence with Left socialists on a joint declaration and explaining the Bolshevik Party's position to them. In July he wrote the draft resolution of the Lefts for presentation to the International Socialist Conference and sent it to the Lefts in various countries with a request for their comments and drafts. Later as a result of correspondence and meetings with the Lefts another draft resolution was drawn up which was presented by the Lefts at the Zimmerwald Conference held on September 5-8, 1915. p.130

<sup>59</sup> *Fabians* — members of the Fabian Society, a British reformist organisation founded in 1884. It was called after the Roman general Quintus Fabius Maximus, who earned the nickname Cunctator (the Delayer) for his delaying tactics and avoidance of a decisive encounter with Hannibal. Most of the Society's members were bourgeois intellectuals: scholars, writers, politicians (such as Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Bernard Shaw, Ramsay MacDonald and others), who denied the need for the class struggle of the proletariat and a socialist revolution, and insisted that the transition from capitalism to socialism lay only through petty reform and a gradual transformation of society. In 1900 the Fabian Society joined the Labour Party. "Fabian socialism" was a source of the Labour Party's ideology. During

the First World War (1914-18) the Fabians took a social-chauvinist stand. p.131

<sup>60</sup> *Trade-unions* in Britain. During the First World War (1914-18) most trade-union leaders took a social-chauvinist stand. The trade-union ideologists deny the need for the organisation of a revolutionary proletarian party, effectively limiting the role of the working party to the representation of the trade-unions in Parliament. p.131

<sup>61</sup> The *Basle Manifesto of 1912* on war was adopted by the Extraordinary International Socialist Congress in Basle held on November 24-25, 1912. It warned the peoples of the danger of the approaching war, exposed its predatory aims and called on the workers of all countries to fight for peace, counterposing "capitalist imperialism to the international solidarity of the proletariat". The Manifesto included a clause inserted by Lenin in the Stuttgart Congress resolution (1907), that in the event of the outbreak of an imperialist war, the Socialists should utilise the economic and political crisis caused by the war to hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule and fight for a socialist revolution. p.132

<sup>62</sup> *Berner Tagwacht*—a daily newspaper founded in Berne in 1893, organ of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party. Robert Grimm was its editor in 1909-18. In the early days of the First World War (1914-18) it published articles by Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring and other Left Social-Democrats. From 1917 the newspaper openly supported the social-chauvinists. Today the newspaper's line coincides on the main issues with that of the bourgeois press. p.134

<sup>63</sup> See Note 72. p.143

<sup>64</sup> See Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1982, pp. 166-68, 182 and 216-17, 218-19. p.146

<sup>65</sup> The *Dreyfus case*—a trial engineered in 1894 by reactionary French militarists. Dreyfus, a Jewish officer of the French General Staff, was falsely accused of espionage and high treason. A court martial sentenced Dreyfus to life imprisonment. When socialists and prominent bourgeois democrats (including Emile Zola, Jean Jaurès and Anatole France) launched a campaign in 1898 for a review of the Dreyfus case, it became a political issue and split the country into two camps—republicans and democrats on one side and the bloc of royalists, clericals, anti-Semites and nationalists on the other. In 1899 Dreyfus was pardoned and released under pressure of public opinion, but it was not until 1906 that the Court of Cassation found him not guilty and reinstated him in the army. p.152

<sup>66</sup> The *Zabern incident* was caused by the brutality of a Prussian officer towards Alsatians in Zabern, Alsace, in November 1913, and provoked an angry outburst among the local, mainly French, population against the Prussian militarists. p.152

<sup>67</sup> For a critique of Renner and Bauer's reactionary idea of "cultural and national autonomy" see Lenin's "Critical Remarks on the National Question" and "Cultural-National Autonomy" (pp.86-117 of this book and Vol. 19, p. 503). p.156

<sup>68</sup> Lenin is referring to Marx's propositions on the Irish question which were set out in his letters to Kugelmann of November 29 and to Engels of December 10, 1869 (see Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 216-17, 218-19). p.156

Lenin is quoting from Marx's letter to Engels of November 2, 1867 (ibid., p. 182).

<sup>69</sup> *Die Glocke* (The Bell)—a fortnightly journal published in Munich and later in Berlin in 1915-25 by Parvus (Alexander Gelfand), a German social-chauvinist. p.157

<sup>70</sup> See Note 33. p.161

<sup>71</sup> *Nashe Dyelo* (Our Cause)—a Menshevik monthly, mouthpiece of the liquidators and Russian social-chauvinists. Published in Petrograd in 1915 in place of *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn) which was closed down in October 1914; six issues appeared altogether. p.161

<sup>72</sup> A reference to the *First International Socialist Conference* held in Zimmerwald from September 5 to 8, 1915. It was convened on the initiative of Italian and Swiss socialists. Lenin called the Zimmerwald Conference the first step in the international struggle against the war. Thirty-eight socialist delegates from eleven European countries attended the Conference. p.161

Lenin headed the delegation of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

A sharp struggle developed at the conference between the revolutionary internationalists led by Lenin and the Kautskyite majority led by the German Social-Democrat Ledebour. The conference adopted a manifesto "To the Workers of Europe". The majority rejected the Left's draft resolution on the war and tasks of Social-Democrats and the draft manifesto. However, due to Lenin's insistence the Zimmerwald Left included a number of basic propositions of revolutionary Marxism in the adopted manifesto. p.161

<sup>73</sup> See Note 76. p.162

<sup>74</sup> The *Second International*—an international association of socialist parties founded in Paris in 1889 with the close participation of Frederick Engels. The beginning of the Second International's activity was marked by a sharp struggle against the anarchists which ended with the decisive victory of Marxism. p.162

After Engels' death opportunist trends began to gain the upper hand in the Second International. With the outbreak of the First World War (1914-18) the opportunist leaders of the Second International (in spite of the Congresses' decisions) went over to the side of

their imperialist governments. With the ideological and political collapse of the Second International the Bolshevik Party began consolidating the Left international forces in the world working-class movement. After the victory of the 1917 October Revolution in Russia in the period of revolutionary upswing revolutionary Marxist-Leninist parties emerged in other countries which founded the Third Communist International in March 1919. p.162

<sup>75</sup> Lenin's article "The Junius Pamphlet" was published in *Sbornik "Sotsial-Demokrata"* No. 1, October 1916.

*Sbornik "Sotsial-Demokrata"* was founded by Lenin and published by the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*. Two issues appeared, in October and December 1916. p.164

<sup>76</sup> The *International Socialist Committee*—the executive body of the Zimmerwald group elected at the first International Socialist Conference in Zimmerwald, September 5-8, 1915. Its headquarters were in Berne. Shortly after the Zimmerwald Conference, on Robert Grimm's suggestion, a larger International Socialist Committee was formed, the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee was represented on it by Lenin, Inessa Armand and Zinoviev. It published the *Internationale Sozialistische Kommission zu Bern. Bulletin (Bulletin of the International Socialist Committee in Berne)* in German, French and English. Six issues appeared between September 1915 and January 1917.

In No. 3 of the *Bulletin*, February, 1916 the article "Ein Vorschlag deutscher Genossen" carried the *Internationale* group theses "Leitsätze" (Basic Principles), which defined the position of the German Left Social-Democrats on the most important questions of theory and policy during the period of the First World War. p.164

<sup>77</sup> The *Internationale group*—a revolutionary organisation of Left German Social-Democrats, founded in the early days of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin and others. In April 1915 Rosa Luxemburg and Franz Mehring started the *Internationale* magazine, which served to unite the core of the Left Social-Democrats in Germany. Their national conference was held in Berlin on January 1, 1916 and officially inaugurated the *Internationale* group. The group issued a number of political leaflets and in 1916 began illegal publication of its Political Letters signed Spartacus (they appeared regularly up to October 1918), and the group came to be known by that name.

It conducted mass revolutionary propaganda, organised mass anti-war demonstrations, and exposed the imperialist nature of the world war and the treachery of the opportunist Social-Democratic leaders. The Spartacus group at its Inaugural Congress (December 30, 1918 to January 1, 1919) founded the Communist Party of Germany. p.164

<sup>78</sup> On August 4, 1914, the Social-Democratic group in the Reichstag voted, along with members of bourgeois groups to grant the Kaiser

government a loan of five thousand million, thereby expressing its approval of the imperialist policy of William II. p.165

<sup>79</sup> *Vorwärts*—a daily, central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, published in Berlin from 1891 to 1933. Through this newspaper Engels fought against all manifestations of opportunism. In the latter half of the 1890s, after his death, it fell into the hands of the Right wing of the party and regularly printed articles by opportunists.

During the First World War (1914-18) *Vorwärts* pursued a social-chauvinist policy, and after the October Revolution it became a mouthpiece of anti-Soviet propaganda. p.166

<sup>80</sup> *Bremer Bürger-Zeitung*—a daily published by the Bremen Social-Democrats from 1890 to 1919. It was the organ of the Left Social-Democrats up to 1916. Then it was taken over by the social-chauvinists. p.166

<sup>81</sup> *Volksfreund*—a Social-Democratic daily founded in 1871 in Braunschweig. In 1914-15 it was the organ of the German Left Social-Democrats, and in 1916 it was taken over by the Kautskyites. p.166

<sup>82</sup> "*International Socialists of Germany*" (*Internationale Sozialisten Deutschlands*)—a group of German Left Social-Democrats who during the First World War united around the magazine *Lichtstrahlen*, published in Berlin from 1913 to 1921. The International Socialists of Germany openly opposed war and opportunism; they took the most consistent stand on the question of separation from the social-chauvinists and Centrists.

The group's representative at the Zimmerwald Conference, J. Borchardt, signed the draft resolutions and the draft manifesto of the Zimmerwald Left. Soon after the Conference, the Zimmerwald Left Bureau was informed that the International Socialists of Germany group had joined it. A note to this effect was published in *Internationale Flugblätter*, No. 1, 1915. The group did not have broad contacts with the masses and soon broke up. p.166

<sup>83</sup> The *O. C. people*—members of the O.C. Secretariat Abroad (O.C. being short for Organising Committee)—the Menshevik guiding centre, was formed at the liquidators' conference in August 1912 in Vienna. During the First World War the O.C. took the social-chauvinist stand, justified war on the side of tsarism, and propagated nationalist and chauvinist ideas. It functioned until the election of the Menshevik Central Committee in August 1917. p.172

<sup>84</sup> K. Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 240). p.173

<sup>85</sup> A reference to the members of the extreme social-chauvinist *Pri-zyv* (The Call) group, founded by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Rev-

olutionaries in September 1915. The group published a weekly *Prizyv* (in Paris) (from October 1915 to March 1917). Its editorial board included Plekhanov, Alexinsky and others. p.174

<sup>86</sup> This article was written in reply to one by P. Kievsky entitled "The Proletariat and the 'Right of Nations to Self-Determination' in the Era of Finance Capital". Both articles were intended for No. 3 of the *Sbornik "Sotsial-Demokrata"*. Due to financial difficulties, No. 3 was not published and the articles did not appear in print. Lenin's article "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism" was widely known in manuscript to Bolsheviks living abroad and to some Left Social-Democrats. During the discussions on the national question abroad V. I. Lenin sent it to Bolsheviks to reach an understanding on theoretical questions.

Lenin's articles on the national question helped vacillating Bolsheviks to take the correct stand on this issue. p.179

<sup>87</sup> *Economism*—an opportunist trend in Russian Social-Democracy at the turn of the century, a Russian form of international opportunism. The Economists limited the tasks of the working-class movement to the economic struggle for higher wages, better working conditions, etc., maintaining that the political struggle should be left to the liberal bourgeoisie. They denied the leading role of the party of the working class, considering that it should merely observe the spontaneous development of the movement and record events. They championed the existing disunity, confusion and parochial amateurish approach in the Social-Democratic ranks and opposed the creation of a centralised working-class party. p.179

<sup>88</sup> On August 6 (19), 1905, the tsar's manifesto was made public, proclaiming the law on the setting up of the Duma and the election procedures. This was referred to as the Bulygin Duma after A. G. Bulygin, the Minister of the Interior, whom the tsar entrusted with drafting the law. The Bolsheviks called upon the workers and peasants to boycott the Bulygin Duma and concentrate all agitation on the slogans of an armed uprising, a revolutionary army, and a provisional revolutionary government. Elections to the Bulygin Duma were not held and the government was unable to convene it because of the 1905 revolution. p.179

<sup>89</sup> A reference to the *otzovists* and *ultimatumists*.

*Otzovists*—an opportunist group which emerged among a section of the Bolsheviks in 1908. Under cover of revolutionary phrases the *otzovists* G. A. Alexinsky and others demanded the recall (the Russian word *otzvat* means "to recall") of the Social-Democratic members of the Third Duma and refused to work in legal organisations.

The *Ultimatumists* differed in form only from the *otzovists*. They proposed that the Social-Democratic Duma members be presented with an ultimatum—either they submit fully to the decisions of the Party Central Committee, or be recalled from the Duma. Lenin called the ultimatumists "bashful *otzovists*". The *otzovists* caused great

harm to the Party. Their policy would have isolated the Party from the masses and turned it into a sectarian organisation, incapable of uniting for a new revolutionary upsurge. p.179

<sup>90</sup> F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (see K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 329). p.197

<sup>91</sup> F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring* (see F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 53). p.206

<sup>92</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*—Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P., published illegally from February 1908 to January 1917. The first issue was put out in Russia, then the newspaper came out in Paris (1909-13) and in Geneva (1914-17). Lenin edited *Sotsial-Demokrat* from December 1911.

Praising the work done by *Sotsial-Demokrat* during the First World War Lenin later wrote that "no class-conscious worker who wishes to understand the development of the ideas of the international socialist revolution and its first victory on October 25, 1917, can manage without an acquaintance with these articles" published in the newspaper (Vol. 27, p. 221). p.222

<sup>93</sup> *Golos* (The Voice)—a daily Menshevik paper published in Paris from September 1914 to January 1915 which followed a Centrist line. In January 1915 *Golos* was replaced by *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word).

Semkovsky's article "Russia Disintegrating?", to which Lenin is evidently referring, appeared in *Nashe Slovo* No. 45, March 21, 1915. p.225

<sup>94</sup> The "Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution" (in a letter Lenin refers to it as an article entitled "Entwaffnung" ("On Disarmament")) was written in German and meant for publication in the Swiss, Swedish and Norwegian Left Social-Democratic press. It was not published at the time, however, Lenin re-edited it somewhat for publication in Russian. The article appeared under the title "The 'Disarmament Slogan'" in *Sbornik "Sotsial-Demokrata"* No. 2, December 1916.

The original German text was published in *Jugend-Internationale* Nos. 9 and 10, September and October 1917, under the heading "Das Militärprogramm der proletarischen Revolution". p.228

<sup>95</sup> *Die Jugend-Internationale* (Youth International)—organ of the International Union of Socialist Youth Organisations associated with the Zimmerwald Left. Published in Zurich from September 1915 to May 1918. p.228

<sup>96</sup> A reference to Robert Grimm's theses on the war question, published in the *Grütli-Verlag*, organ of the Swiss bourgeois organisation *Grütli-Verein* (Nos. 162 and 164, July 14 and 17, 1916). p.228



<sup>97</sup> *Neues Leben* (New Life)—a monthly journal of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party published in Berne from January 1915 to December 1917. Spoke for the Zimmerwald Right and took up a socialchauvinist position early in 1917. p.228

<sup>98</sup> *Vorbote* (The Herald)—a magazine, theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left, published in German in Berne. Lenin played an active part in founding the magazine and, after the appearance of its first issue, in organising a French edition to reach a wider readership. p.228

<sup>99</sup> A reference to §5 of the theses of the *Internationale* group which were published on February 29, 1916 in the *Bulletin of the International Socialist Committee* No. 3. This paragraph contains the assertion that national wars are impossible in the epoch of imperialism. p.232

<sup>100</sup> A reference to the Declaration of the German and Austro-Hungarian governments published on November 5, 1916. Poland was proclaimed a constitutional monarchy under the protection of Germany and Austria-Hungary. p.234

<sup>101</sup> The views on the nationalities problem developed by Rosa Luxemburg in the magazine of the Polish Social-Democrats, *Przegląd Socjaldemokratyczny* (Social-Democratic Review), published in Cracow. p.234

<sup>102</sup> A reference to a series of articles by Engels entitled "What Have the Working Classes to Do With Poland?" which was reprinted in 1916 in the *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, published by Grünberg. p.234

<sup>103</sup> See K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, pp. 254-55 and F. Engels, "Der Sozialismus in Deutschland" (*Werke*, Bd. 22, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1963, S. 252-56). p.237

<sup>104</sup> Lenin has in mind Kautsky's article "Einige Feststellungen über Marx und Engels" ("Some Facts About Marx and Engels") printed in *Die Neue Zeit*, No. 1, October 2, 1908, pp. 5-7. p.242

<sup>105</sup> Inessa Armand gave her lecture on pacifism on January 21, 1917. p.244

<sup>106</sup> *The Provisional Government* in Russia, the government of the bourgeoisie and landlords, was formed on March 2 (15), 1917 after the February Revolution in accordance with the agreement by the Provisional Committee of the State Duma with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshevik leaders of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. It pursued the anti-popular policy of continuing the imperialist war and suppressing the revolutionary movement and reflected the attempts of the ruling

classes to consolidate and to retain power. The Provisional Government was overthrown by the October Revolution on October 25 (November 7), 1917. p.246

<sup>107</sup> *Rabochaya Gazeta*—a Menshevik daily newspaper published in Petrograd from March 7 (20) to November 30 (December 13), 1917. On August 30 (September 12) it became the organ of the Menshevik C.C. It supported the bourgeois Provisional Government and took a hostile stand towards the October Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet power. p.248

<sup>108</sup> §9 of the Party Programme adopted at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903 says: "All nationalities forming part of the state shall have the right to self-determination." p.248

<sup>109</sup> The Provisional Government announced the convocation of a Constituent Assembly in its declaration of March 2 (15), 1917. On June 14 (27) it decided that elections should be held on September 17 (30), but in August postponed the elections until November 12 (25).

The elections to the Constituent Assembly took place after the October Socialist Revolution on November 12 (25), 1917. They were held in accordance with lists compiled before the Revolution and regulations adopted by the Provisional Government.

The Constituent Assembly was convened by the Soviet Government and opened on January 5 (18), 1918 in Petrograd. The counter-revolutionary majority in the Constituent Assembly rejected the "Declaration of the Working and Exploited People", put forward by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and refused to recognise Soviet power. The bourgeois Constituent Assembly was dissolved on January 6 (19) by decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. p.248

<sup>110</sup> *Birzhevka* (*Birzheviye Vedomosti*) (Stock Exchange Recorder)—a commercial newspaper founded in 1880. From 1902 it came out twice a day. It was notorious for its corruption and lack of principle. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917, its editors launched a campaign of incitement against the Bolshevik Party and Lenin. It was closed down by the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet in late October 1917. p.250

<sup>111</sup> The resolution on the national question was adopted at the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) held in Petrograd from April 24 to 29 (May 7 to 12), 1917 (see pp.246-47 of this book).

It was the first legal conference of the Party. It was attended by 131 delegates with a vote and 18 delegates with a consultative voice, representing 78 Party organisations.

The April Conference was of historic significance because it adopted Lenin's programme of transition to the second stage of the revolution in Russia, drafted a plan of action for turning the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one, and demanded the transfer



of all state power to the Soviets. Under this slogan the Bolsheviks prepared the masses for the proletarian revolution. p.250

<sup>112</sup> *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life)—a daily newspaper published in Petrograd from April 18 (May 1) 1917 to July 1918; sponsored by Menshevik Internationalists and writers grouped around the magazine *Le-topis* (Chronicle).

The paper adopted a hostile attitude to the October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power. From June 1, 1918 it appeared in two editions—in Petrograd and Moscow. Both were closed down in July 1918. p.253

<sup>113</sup> A reference to the belligerents in the First World War (1914-18); the Entente (France, Britain, Russia, Italy and the U.S.A. which joined them) and also Belgium, Serbia, Romania, Japan and China; and the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria). p.254

<sup>114</sup> The Chartist movement in Britain, *Chartism*—a mass revolutionary movement of the British workers in the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century. Its organisers drew up a People's Charter to be presented to Parliament, demanding universal suffrage, annual parliaments, vote by ballot, equal electoral areas, no property qualifications for Candidates for Parliament and payment for M.P.s. For several years millions of workers and craftsmen all over the country took part in meetings and demonstrations.

Parliament rejected the People's Charter and all the workers' petitions.

The government brutally suppressed the Chartist movement and arrested its leaders. However, the Chartists had a tremendous influence on the international working-class movement. p.256

<sup>115</sup> The *Anti-Socialist Law* (*The Exceptional Law Against the Socialists*) was introduced in Germany in 1878. It outlawed all organisations of the Social-Democratic Party, working-class associations, and the working-class press, and provided for the confiscation of socialist literature. Social-Democrats were harassed and deported. However, the Social-Democratic Party adapted itself to underground activity. At the same time, the Party used various legal means of strengthening its ties with the masses. In 1890 the Anti-Socialist Law was lifted as a result of mass pressure and the mounting working-class movement. p.256

<sup>116</sup> Lenin is referring to a manifesto issued by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies to the Peoples of the World which was published by the newspaper *Izvestia* No. 15, of March 15, 1917. p.258

<sup>117</sup> Lenin is referring to the revolutionary action in August 1917 by German sailors led by a revolutionary sailors' organisation that had 4,000 members by the end of July 1917. The organisation decid-

ed to fight for a democratic peace and prepare for an uprising. Manifestations broke out in the navy in early August. The sailors' movement spread to the ships of several squadrons at Wilhelmshaven. These manifestations were put down with great savagery. Leaders of the movement were shot and other active participants were sentenced to long terms of hard labour. p.258

<sup>118</sup> The draft of the *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People* was placed before the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 3 (16), 1918, adopted as a basis by a majority, and referred to a Co-ordinating Commission for final drafting. On behalf of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee it was read out by Sverdlov at the first sitting of the Constituent Assembly on January 5 (18) and presented for approval. The counter-revolutionary majority of the Assembly rejected the motion to discuss it. On January 12 (25), it was approved by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets and subsequently formed the basis of the Soviet Constitution. p.259

<sup>119</sup> On December 6 (19), 1917, the Finnish Diet adopted a declaration of Finland's independence. In accordance with the nationalities policy of the Soviet state, the Council of People's Commissars, on December 18 (31), 1917, issued a decree on Finland's independence. At the meeting of the Council, Lenin personally handed the text of the decree to Prime Minister Svinhufvud who led the Finnish Government delegation.

On December 19, 1917 (January 1, 1918), in accordance with a treaty concluded between Russia and Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria at Brest-Litovsk on December 2 (15), the Soviet Government invited the Persian Government to elaborate a common plan for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Persia.

On December 29, 1917 (January 11, 1918), the Government issued the Decree on Turkish Armenia. p.260

<sup>120</sup> Lenin's message of greetings "To the Indian Revolutionary Association" was broadcast on May 10, 1920, in reply to the resolution addressed to Lenin by the Assembly of Indian Revolutionaries held in Kabul on February 17, 1920. p.275

<sup>121</sup> Lenin is referring to the Peace Treaty of Versailles which put an end to the First World War of 1914-18. It was signed on June 28, 1919 by the USA, Britain, France, Italy, Japan and other Allied Powers, on the one hand, and Germany, on the other.

The treaty legalised the redivision of the capitalist world in favour of the victor countries, and established a system of relationships between countries that aimed at strangling Soviet Russia and suppressing the world revolutionary movement. p.277

<sup>122</sup> Lenin is referring to the peace treaty between Soviet Russia and the powers of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) signed on March 3, 1918 at Brest-Litovsk and ratified on March 15 by the Fourth (Extraordinary) All-Russia Con-

gress of Soviets. The peace terms were very harsh for Soviet Russia. According to the treaty, Poland, almost all of the Baltic states, and part of Byelorussia were placed under the control of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Ukraine was separated from Soviet Russia, becoming a state dependent on Germany. Turkey gained control of the cities of Kars, Batum and Ardagan. On November 13, 1918, following the November revolution in Germany, which overthrew the monarchist regime, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee annulled the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

p.277

<sup>123</sup> The *League of Nations*—an international organisation which existed between the First and Second World wars. It was founded in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference of the victor countries. During 1920-21 it was one of the centres for the organisation of armed intervention against Soviet Russia.

In 1934 the USSR joined the League of Nations in order to carry on the struggle for peace but its attempts to establish a peace front encountered the resistance of reactionary circles in the Western Powers. From the beginning of the Second World War the League of Nations in effect ceased to exist. The formal decision to dissolve the League was taken at a specially convened Assembly in April 1946.

p.277

<sup>124</sup> As a result of the revolution which commenced in Finland on January 27, 1918, the bourgeois government of Svinhufvud was overthrown and the working class assumed power. On January 29, the revolutionary government of Finland, the Council of People's Representatives, was formed.

On March 1, 1918, a treaty between the Finnish Socialist Workers' Republic and the R.S.F.S.R. was signed in Petrograd. Based on the principle of complete equality and respect for the sovereignty of the two sides, this was the first treaty in world history to be signed between two socialist countries.

As a result of German armed intervention, the Finnish revolution was put down in May 1918 after a bitter civil war. White terror reigned in the country; thousands of revolutionary workers and peasants were executed or tortured to death in prisons.

p.278

<sup>125</sup> As a result of mass action by the Lettish proletariat and peasantry against the German invaders and the counter-revolutionary government of Ulmanis, a provisional Soviet government was established in Latvia on December 17, 1918, which issued a Manifesto on the assumption of state power by the Soviets.

In March 1919, German troops and White Guards, armed and equipped by U.S. and Entente imperialists, attacked Soviet Latvia. After fierce fighting the entire territory of Latvia was overrun by the interventionists by the beginning of 1920. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie established a regime of terror in the country.

p.278

<sup>126</sup> The *Commission on the National and Colonial Questions*, formed by the Second Congress of the Communist International, consisted of

twenty members, representatives from countries in Europe, Asia and America. The work of the commission was guided by Lenin, whose theses on the national and colonial questions were discussed at its first meeting on July 25, 1920 and presented to the Congress on July 26. The commission and plenary meetings of the Congress also discussed supplementary theses proposed by M. N. Roy.

p.284

<sup>127</sup> A reference to an international organisation of Centrist socialist parties and groups that was forced out of the Second International by the revolutionary masses. It was called the "Two-and-a-Half International" or "Vienna International" (the official name the International Association of Socialist Parties) and was formed at a conference in Vienna in February 1921. While criticising the Second International, the leaders of the Two-and-a-Half International pursued an opportunist, splitting policy on all key issues of the proletarian movement and sought to utilise their association to offset the growing influence of the Communists among the working-class masses. In May 1923, the Second and Two-and-a-Half International merged into the so-called Socialist Labour International.

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# NAME INDEX

## A

- Alexander III (Romanov)* (1845-1894)—Russian Emperor (1881-94).—237
- Alexinsky, Grigory Alexeyevich* (b. 1879)—Social-Democrat at the beginning of his political career; sided with the Bolsheviks during the 1905-07 Revolution; an otzovist in the period of reaction (1907-10); during the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist; contributed to a number of bourgeois newspapers.—179, 206, 214, 216, 219
- A. P.*—see *Pannekoek, Anton*
- Armand, Inessa Fyodorovna* (1874-1920)—joined the RSDLP in 1904; experienced revolutionary, prominent figure in the international women's labour and communist movement. Took an active part in the 1905-07 Revolution. In 1910 was elected Secretary of the RSDLP Committee Abroad. During the First World War (1914-18) took part in the Zimmerwald (1915) and Kienthal conferences of the internationalists.—236-44
- Austerlitz, Friedrich* (1862-1931)—a leader of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party, Editor-in-Chief of its central organ *Arbeiter-Zeitung*; deputy to Parliament from Vienna.—166

## B

- Barboni, T.*—Italian social-chauvinist.—138
- Bauer, Otto* (1882-1938)—a leader of the Right wing of Austrian Social-Democracy and the Second International; ideologist of "Austro-Marxism", a variety of reformism; one of the authors of the bourgeois-nationalistic theory of "cultural-national autonomy"; did not accept the October Socialist Revolution.—76, 95, 104, 105, 153
- Beilis, Mendel Teyveyevich* (b. 1873)—a Jew by nationality, who, in 1911, was put on trial on the false charge of having murdered a Christian boy for a ritual purpose. The trial lasted for more than two years. It was a striking demonstration of the chauvinist and anti-Semitic politics of the tsarist government. In spite of the direct pressure on the part of the government, the specially selected jury, the jugglery with facts and the false evidence given by members of the Black Hundreds and policemen who acted as witnesses, the court was forced to acquit Beilis in 1913.—104, 118

- Berdyayev, Nikolai Alexandrovich* (1874-1948)—reactionary philosopher, idealist and mystic; took a stand similar to "legal Marxism" and then became an overt enemy of Marxism; Constitutional Democrat from 1905.—105
- Bernstein, Eduard* (1850-1932)—leader of the extreme opportunist wing of German Social-Democracy and the Second International; an ideologist of reformism and revisionism. The views of Bernstein and his followers and their opportunist activities led them to the direct betrayal of the interests of the working class, which ultimately brought about the collapse of the Second International.—49, 105, 166
- Bismarck, Otto Eduard Leopold* (1815-1898)—statesman and diplomat of Prussia and Germany. Bismarck's main aim was to unify small separate German states "with blood and iron" and create a single German Empire under the hegemony of Junker Prussia.—60, 128
- Bissolati, Leonida* (1857-1920)—a founder of the Italian Socialist Party and a leader of its extreme reformist wing; in 1912 was expelled from the Italian Socialist Party and formed a "social reformist party"; during the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist, advocated participation of Italy in the war on the side of the Entente.—142
- Bobrinsky, Vladimir Alexeyevich, Count* (b. 1868)—Russian reactionary politician, big landowner and sugar manufacturer; as extreme nationalist, advocated the policy of Russianising the border regions of Russia; after the October Socialist Revolution fought against the Soviet power.—127, 128
- Bogdanov, A. (Malinovsky, Alexander Alexandrovich)* (1873-1928)—Social-Democrat, philosopher, sociologist, economist, a physician by profession; joined the Bolsheviks after the Second Congress of the RSDLP (1903); headed the otzovist movement during the years of reaction (1907-10) and new revolutionary revival; attempted to create his own philosophical system, empirio-monism, a variety of the subjective idealist Machist philosophy.—244
- Bosh, Yevgenia Bogdanovna* (1879-1925)—member of the RSDLP from 1901; during the First World War (1914-18) shared the anti-Leninist views of Bukharin and Pyatakov on the nationalities and other questions; joined them to form an anti-Party group; after the October Socialist Revolution was member of the first Soviet government of the Ukraine, later held Party and administrative posts.—238
- Boulanger, Georges Ernest* (1837-1891)—French general; minister of War (1886-87); seeking to establish a military dictatorship, he led a chauvinistic movement for a revanchist war against Germany; in 1889, after his ties with monarchists were revealed, fled to Belgium.—237, 243
- Bourbons*—French royal dynasty (1589-1792, 1814-15, 1815-30).—172
- Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich* (1888-1938)—member of the RSDLP from 1906; worked as propagandist in different districts of Moscow; in 1911 emigrated; in 1915 contributed to the magazine *Kommunist*, held non-Marxist views on such questions as the state,

the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the right of nations to self-determination.—238, 239

*Burtsev, Vladimir Lvovich* (1862-1942)—took part in the revolutionary movement in the 1880s, was close to People's Will; before the first Russian revolution was close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries, after its defeat supported Constitutional-Democrats; during the First World War (1914-18) was an extreme chauvinist.—125

## C

*Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Gavrilovich* (1828-1889)—Russian revolutionary democrat, utopian socialist, scientist, writer and literary critic, materialist philosopher, leader of the revolutionary democratic movement in Russia in the 1860s. After arrest in 1862 he was sentenced to 7-years penal servitude and to perpetual exile in Siberia; he returned only in 1883.—99, 126

*Chkheidze, Nikolai Semyonovich* (1864-1926)—a Menshevik leader; deputy to the Third and Fourth Dumas from the Tiflis Gubernia, headed Menshevik group in the Fourth Duma. V. I. Lenin called him "a near-Party Social-Democrat" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 413). Centrist during the First World War (1914-18), but actually supported Russian social-chauvinists.—174, 177

*Chkhenkeli, Akaky Ivanovich* (1874-1959)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik, lawyer; liquidator during the period of reaction (1907-10) and of a new revolutionary upsurge.—174, 172

*Clemenceau, Georges Benjamin* (1841-1929)—French politician and statesman, for many years a leader of Radicals; from 1906 to 1909 head of the French Government; in the interests of big capital pursued policy of brutal repressions against the working class. On the eve of the First World War (1914-18) broke with the Radicals. During the war was an extreme chauvinist; was one of the organisers and sponsors of the armed intervention against Soviet Russia.—54, 55

*Corradini, Enrico* (1865-1931)—Italian nationalist, publicist; in 1910 headed the Italian Party of Nationalists; after the First World War (1914-18) joined the Fascists.—140

*Cunow, Heinrich* (1862-1936)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat, historian, sociologist and ethnographer, professor; first sided with Marxists, later became a revisionist and falsifier of Marxism; during the First World War (1914-18) was a theoretician of social-imperialism.—147, 159, 217

## D

*Dąbrowski, Jarosław* (1836-1871)—prominent Polish revolutionary, general of the Paris Commune of 1871; played an important part in the Polish revolutionary movement, was one of the organisers of the Polish liberation uprising of 1863-64; was one of the most resolute defenders of the Paris Commune; was killed on May 23,

1871, during the defence of Montmartre.—36

*David, Eduard* (1863-1930)—German Social-Democrat, revisionist. In his book "Socialism and Agriculture" he criticised agrarian theory of Marxism and advocated the idea of "stability" of small-scale farming under capitalism. After the 1918 November revolution in Germany was a member of the bourgeois government of the Weimar Republic several times.—49, 166, 176

*Dolgorukov, Pavel Dmitriyevich, Prince* (1866-1927)—big landowner; a founder of the bourgeois Constitutional-Democratic Party (Cadets). Following the October Socialist Revolution took an active part in whiteguard conspiracies against the Soviet government.—126

*Dontsov, D.*—member of the petty-bourgeois Ukrainian Social-Democratic Labour Party. During the First World War (1914-18) was one of the founders of the "League for the Liberation of the Ukraine", a nationalist organisation, which sought to achieve "independence" for the Ukraine with the help of the Austrian monarchy.—95, 98

*Dragomanov, Mikhailo Petrovich* (1841-1895)—Ukrainian historian, ethnographer and journalist; bourgeois liberal; contributed to the liberal journals; one of the most prominent leaders of the moderate wing of the Ukrainian national liberation movement, stood for cultural and national autonomy.—112

*Dreyfus, Alfred* (1859-1935)—an officer of the French General Staff, a Jew, who was condemned to life imprisonment on a false charge of high treason in 1894. Thanks to the working class and progressive-minded intellectuals, who waged a struggle in his defence, Dreyfus was pardoned in 1899, and in 1906 rehabilitated.—152

*Dühring, Eugen* (1833-1921)—German economist and philosopher; petty-bourgeois socialist.—206

*Duncker, Franz* (1822-1888)—German bourgeois politician and publisher; in the 1860s one of the founders of reformist trade unions.—164.

## E

*Ellenbogen, Wilhelm* (b. 1863)—revisionist leader of the Austrian Social-Democracy; member of Austrian parliament in 1901-14; social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18).—106

*Engels, Frederick* (1820-1895)—35, 83, 127, 173, 197, 206, 210, 211, 230, 234, 237, 240-41, 242, 244

## G

*Galliffet, Gaston Alexandre Auguste* (1830-1909)—French general, fought in several wars waged by France; hangman of the Paris Commune (1871); notorious for his brutality towards communards as a commander of a cavalry brigade of the Versailles army. In 1872 suppressed an uprising of Arabs in Algeria.—55, 231

*Garibaldi, Giuseppe* (1807-1882)—a most outstanding leader of the Italian revolutionary democracy, prominent general, led the struggle

- of the Italian people against foreign enslavement in the name of the unification of Italy (1848-67); welcomed the Paris Commune of 1871 and was elected, in his absence, to the Central Committee of the National Guard. Marx, Engels and Lenin praised Garibaldi as a prominent freedom-fighter.—138, 155
- Genghis Khan (Temüjin)* (b. about 1155-d. 1227)—Mongol khan and conqueror. Completed the formation of a single Mongol state in 1206; undertook military expeditions to Northern China, Central Asia, Iran and Trans-Caucasia.—53
- Giolitti, Giovanni* (1842-1928)—Italian statesman, leader of the Liberals; Prime Minister (1892-93, 1903-05, 1906-09, 1920-21); by means of liberal reforms and concessions with opportunist leaders of the Socialist Party, sought to keep the working-class movement from taking revolutionary action.—141
- Gorter, Hermann* (1864-1927)—Dutch Social-Democrat, journalist; in 1907 one of the founders of *De Tribune*, organ of the Left wing of the Dutch Social-Democratic Workers' Party, in 1909 Social-Democratic Party of Holland ("Party of Tribunists"). During the First World War (1914-18) an internationalist, adherent to the Zimmerwald Left.—158, 234
- Grigory*—see *Zinoviev, G. Y.*
- Grimm, Robert* (1881-1956)—a leader of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War (1914-18) Centrist, participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, Chairman of International Socialist Committee; one of the organisers of the Centrist (II 1/2) International.—228
- Grünberg, Karl* (1861-1940)—Austrian Social-Democrat, lawyer, economist and historian. From 1911 to 1929 published in Leipzig 14-volume *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung* (Archives for the History of Socialism and Working-Class Movement).—234
- Guchkov, Alexander Ivanovich* (1862-1936)—big capitalist, organiser and leader of the Octobrists; after the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917, War and Naval Minister in the first bourgeois Provisional Government; after the October Socialist Revolution actively fought against Soviet power, later White émigré.—98, 126, 251
- Guesde, Jules* (1845-1922)—a founder and leader of the French Socialist Party and of the Second International. Before the First World War (1914-18) headed the Party's Left, revolutionary wing. On the outbreak of the war took a social-chauvinist stand and became a member of the bourgeois government of France.—176, 184
- Gurevich, Emmanuil Lvovich (Smirnov, Y.)* (b. 1865)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik; during the period of reaction (1907-10) and the new revolutionary upsurge was a liquidator, one of the founders and a contributor to *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn), the periodical of the Menshevik liquidators; during the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist.—125
- Gurvich, Isaak Adolfovich* (1860-1924)—economist; author of the works *Economic Situation in the Russian Countryside* and *Immigration and Labour*; in the early 1900s became a revisionist.—207

## H

- Hardie, James Keir* (1856-1915)—prominent figure in the British working-class movement, reformist, a leader of the Independent Labour Party and a founder of the Labour Party. In 1888 founded the Scottish Labour Party. At the beginning of the First World War (1914-18) took a centrist stand, then openly sided with social-chauvinists.—53
- Hilferding, Rudolf* (1877-1941)—an opportunist leader of the German Social-Democracy and of the Second International; theoretician of the so-called Austro-Marxism; in 1910 published his work *Finance Capital*, which played a positive role in the study of monopolistic capitalism, though at the same time it had serious errors as regards theory and put forward opportunist ideas. During the First World War (1914-18) was a Centrist, advocated unity with social-imperialists.—194, 205
- Hindenburg, Paul* (1847-1934)—a German military leader and statesman, Field Marshal, representative of reactionary and chauvinist German imperialism; after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution was one of the active organisers of military intervention against Soviet Russia; took part in the suppression of the 1918 November revolution in Germany; in 1925-34 was President of the Weimar Republic.—133, 137, 163, 208, 234
- Hohenzollerns*—a dynasty of Prussian kings (1701-1918), and German emperors (1871-1918).—162
- Hyndman, Henry Mayers* (1842-1921)—British Socialist, reformist. Between 1900 and 1910 member of the International Socialist Bureau; during the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist; was hostile to the October Revolution and supported intervention against Soviet Russia.—131, 147

## J

- Joffre, Joseph Jacques Gesaire* (1852-1931)—Marshal of France; at the beginning of the First World War (1914-18) Commander-in-Chief of the French army; one of the organisers of the foreign military intervention against Soviet Russia.—135, 137
- Junius*—see *Luxemburg, Rosa*

## K

- Kautsky, Karl* (1854-1938)—a leader of the German Social Democrats and the Second International, at first a Marxist, later a renegade from Marxism and theoretician of the most dangerous and harmful variety of opportunism—Centrism (Kautskyism).—34, 35, 37, 49, 95, 106, 139, 145, 147, 148, 163, 165, 166, 172, 176, 186, 193, 210, 230, 242
- Kievsky, P., Kii*—see *Pyatakov, G. L.*
- Kiknadze, Nikolai Davidovich* (1885-1951)—member of the Bolshe-

- vik Party from 1903; experienced revolutionary; from 1906 to 1917 an émigré in Switzerland.—232-35
- Kitchener, Horatio Herbert, Earl of* (1850-1916)—Field Marshal, an active colonialist and representative of the British imperialist military; in 1911-14, as the British Consul General in Egypt virtually ruled the country; during the First World War (1914-18) War Secretary in Britain.—133
- Kolchak, Alexander Vasilyevich* (1874-1920)—admiral of the tsarist navy, monarchist, one of the leaders of the Russian counter-revolution in 1918-19 and protégé of the Entente.—265
- Kosovsky, Vladimir (Levinson, M. Y.)* (1870-1941)—a leader of the Bund; at the Second RSDLP Congress (1903) was a delegate from the Bund's Foreign Committee, an opponent of *Iskra*; after the Congress, Menshevik. In the years of reaction (1907-10) contributed to the liquidators' journal *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn) and to the newspaper *Luch* (Ray); during the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist; was hostile towards the October Revolution.—77
- Krestovnikov, Grigory Alexandrovich* (1855-1918)—an Octobrist; big industrialist, president of the Moscow Merchant Bank and the Moscow Stock-Exchange Committee.—126
- Kristan, Etbin* (1867-1953)—Slovene politician, writer and journalist; contributed to a number of workers' papers; before the First World War (1914-18) one of the leaders of the Slovene Social-Democracy.—106
- Kropotkin, Pyotr Alexeyevich* (1842-1921)—a leader and theoretician of anarchism, prince. While abroad, joined the Bakunin group in 1872. As an anarchist, he took part in the Narodnik movement when he returned to Russia; in 1874 was arrested and put in the SS. Peter and Paul Fortress. In 1874 fled abroad, where he launched an active struggle against Marxism; opposed Marx's teaching on the class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat. During the First World War (1914-18) he took a chauvinist stand.—125
- Krupskaya, Nadezhda Konstantinovna* (N. K.) (1869-1939)—professional revolutionary, prominent figure in the Communist Party and the Soviet state; the wife of Lenin.—235
- Kutler, Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1859-1924)—prominent figure in the Gadet Party; official in the Ministry of Finance; in 1905-06; Minister of Agriculture and Land Use; member of the Second and Third State Dumas; an author of the project of agrarian programme of Cadets.—126

## L

- Labriola, Arturo* (1873-1959)—an Italian political leader, lawyer and economist; a leader of the syndicalist movement in Italy; author of a number of books on the theory of syndicalism, in which he tried to adjust his programme of the so-called revolutionary syndicalism to Marxism, "correcting" the latter.—139-41
- Lassalle, Ferdinand* (1825-1864)—German petty-bourgeois socialist, founder of a variety of opportunism in the German working-class

- movement, Lassalleanism; a founder of the General German Workers' Association (1863). The formation of the Association had positive significance for the working-class movement; however, Lassalle, who was elected President of the Association, led it along an opportunist path.—128, 173
- Ledebour, Georg* (1850-1947)—a German Social-Democrat; from 1900 to 1918 he represented German Social-Democrats in the Reichstag. During the First World War (1914-18) he came out for restoration of international ties, took part in the Zimmerwald Conference, joined the Zimmerwald Right.—48
- Legien, Karl* (1861-1920)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat, a trade-union leader, revisionist; from 1893 to 1920 (with intervals), a Social-Democratic deputy to the Reichstag; during the First World War (1914-18) was an extreme chauvinist.—166, 171, 172, 176
- Lensch, Paul* (1873-1926)—German Social-Democrat; in 1905-13, editor of *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, organ of the Left wing of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. When the First World War (1914-18) began he took a social-chauvinist stand.—157, 171, 217
- Liebknecht, Karl* (1871-1919)—an outstanding leader of the German and international working-class movement, a leader of the Left wing of the German Social-Democracy; Wilhelm Liebknecht's son, barrister by profession.
- He fought actively against opportunism and militarism. From the outset of the First World War he came out resolutely against supporting the Kaiser government in the predatory war. In the Reichstag he alone voted against war credits (December 2, 1914). One of the leaders of the *Internationale* group, renamed then Spartacus and later Spartacus League. During the November revolution in Germany, together with R. Luxemburg, he led the revolutionary vanguard of the German workers; one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany and leaders of the Berlin workers' uprising of January 1919. After the uprising was crushed he was brutally assassinated by counter-revolutionaries.—177
- Liebman, F. (Hersh, P. M.)* (b. 1882)—Bund leader, member of its CC in 1911, member of the editorial board of *Otkliki Bunda* (Bund Response). During the First World War (1914-18) supported the expansionist tsarist policy; lived in Switzerland.—86, 90, 93, 94, 106, 108, 109, 111, 117, 147, 159
- Lukashevich (Tuchapsky), Pavel Lukich* (1869-1922)—active in the revolutionary movement from 1883; contributed to the Social-Democratic press; adhered to Bolsheviks after the Second RSDLP Congress (1903); during the period of reaction (1907-10) and new revolutionary upsurge dissociated from Bolsheviks.—97
- Luxemburg, Rosa* (1871-1919)—prominent in the international working-class movement; a leader of the Left wing of the Second International; founder and leader of the Social-Democratic Party of Poland; fought the nationalist tendency of the Polish working-class movement, Bernsteinism and Millerandism in German Social-Democracy; active in the first Russian revolution (in Warsaw). But during the reaction (1907-10) and the upsurge of the revolutionary



movement Luxemburg took conciliatory attitude towards liquidators, expressed incorrect views on the national question in Poland.

From the very outbreak of the First World War (1914-18) took an internationalist stand; a founder of the *Internationale* group of German Social-Democracy. After the November 1918 revolution in Germany played an active role in the work of the Constituent Congress of the German Communist Party. In January 1919 was arrested and assassinated by the order of Scheidemann's government. Lenin highly appraised Luxemburg, but repeatedly criticised her errors in order to help her to take the correct stand.—84, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 164-77, 213, 229, 239

*Lyakhov, Vladimir Platonovich* (1869-1919)—tsarist colonel, brutally suppressed the national-revolutionary movement in the Caucasus and Iran.—52

## M

*Manin, S. L.*—Bund member; in 1913 contributed to *Luch* (The Ray), organ of Mensheviks-Liquidators.—105

*Maring, Henrich* (1883-1942)—Dutch Social-Democrat; lived in Java in 1913-19; joined Left Social-Democrats, later, member of communist parties of Java and the Netherlands; delegate to the Second Congress of the Communist International; in 1921-23 representative of the Executive Committee of the Communist International for Far East in China. In 1927 adopted Trotskyism and withdrew from the Communist Party of the Netherlands.—284

*Martov, L. (Tsederbaum, Yuli Osipovich)* (1873-1923)—a Menshevik leader; at the Second RSDLP Congress (1903) headed the opportunist minority (Mensheviks), since then a leader of Menshevik central party institutions, an editor of their press; liquidator during the period of reaction (1907-10) and the new revolutionary upsurge; Centrist during the First World War (1914-18).—174, 177, 206

*Martynov (Piker, Alexander Samoilovich)* (1865-1935)—a leader of Economism, active in the struggle against Leninist *Iskra*; later, an ideologist of Menshevism; liquidator during the period of reaction (1907-10); Centrist during the First World War (1914-18).—215

*Marx, Karl* (1818-1883)—34, 35, 50, 127, 128, 149, 155, 156, 157, 159, 173, 174, 175, 193, 200, 211, 236, 237, 241

*Maslov, Pyotr Pavlovich* (1867-1946)—economist, Social-Democrat, author of some books on the agrarian question, where he attempted to revise Marxism. After the RSDLP split, joined Mensheviks, propounded the programme of the "municipalisation of the land". Liquidator during the period of reaction (1907-10), social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18).—125

*Medem, Vladimir Davydovich (Grinberg, V. D.)* (1879-1923)—a Bund leader; in 1906 member of the Bund CC; delegate to the Fifth (London) RSDLP Congress; supported Mensheviks. After the October Socialist Revolution headed Bund organisations in Poland. Left for the USA in 1921, published slanderous articles about Soviet Russia in the Right-socialist Jewish newspaper *Vorwärts*.—115

*Mehring, Franz* (1846-1919)—prominent in the working-class movement, a leader and theoretician of the Left wing of German Social-Democracy; historian, publicist and literary scholar. Together with K. Liebknecht, R. Luxemburg and others founded the Communist Party of Germany.—37, 164

*Melenevsky, (Basok, Sokolovsky) Maryan Ivanovich* (1879-1938)—Ukrainian petty-bourgeois nationalist, Menshevik; activist of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic organisation *Spilka*; participated in Vienna anti-party conference (August, 1912); during the First World War (1914-18) member of pro-German Union for the Liberation of the Ukraine.—96, 97

*Meller-Zakomelsky, Alexander Nikolayevich* (b. 1844)—tsarist general, baron, extreme reactionary. Together with general Rennenkampf led a punitive expedition to the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1906; was appointed governor-general of Latvia and Estonia, where he suppressed revolutionary movement of workers and peasants (October, 1906); member of State Council in 1909-17; whiteguard émigré after the Great October Socialist Revolution.—61

*Menshikov, Mikhail Osipovich* (1859-1919)—reactionary publicist; contributed to the Black Hundred newspaper *Novoye Vremya* (New Times). V. I. Lenin called him a "faithful watchdog of the tsar's Black Hundreds" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 90).—125

*Michels, Roberto* (1876-1936)—Italian bourgeois economist and sociologist, professor, author of a number of books on the history of political economy and sociology.—138, 139, 141

*Milyukov, Pavel Nikolayevich* (1859-1943)—a leader of the Cadet Party, ideologist of Russian imperialist bourgeoisie; historian and publicist.—251

*Morley, John* (1838-1923)—English bourgeois politician and author; Minister for Indian Affairs in 1905-10, pursued a policy of suppression of national-liberation movement; later, Lord-Chairman of the Council, retired in 1914.—53

*Myasnikov (Myasnikyan), Alexander Fyodorovich* (1886-1925)—Party member from 1906; military organiser and secretary of the RCP(B) Moscow Committee in 1919-20; chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar for Defence in Armenia in 1921.—292

## N

*Nakhimson, M. I., (Spectator)* (b. 1880)—economist and publicist; member of Bund from 1899 to 1921; centrist during the First World War (1914-18); author of several works on world economy problems.—172

*Napoleon I (Napoleon Bonaparte)* (1769-1821)—Emperor of the French (1804-14 and 1815).—168, 249, 250

*Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon Bonaparte)* (1808-1873)—Emperor of the French (1852-70).—35, 61

*Nicholas II (Romanov)* (1868-1918)—the last Russian Emperor; reig-



ned from 1894 up to 1917 February bourgeois-democratic revolution.—51, 125, 127, 128, 133, 208  
*N. K.*—see *Krupskaya, N. K.*

## P

*Pannekoek, Anton (A. P.)* (1873-1960)—Dutch Social-Democrat. In 1907 founded the newspaper *De Tribune*, organ of the Left wing of the Dutch Social-Democratic Labour Party, which became Social-Democratic Party of the Netherlands ("Tribune" Party) in 1909. From 1910 was closely connected with German Left Social-Democrats, actively contributed to their press; an internationalist during the First World War (1914-18); between 1918 and 1921 member of the Communist Party of the Netherlands; took an active part in the work of the Communist International; held an ultra-Left, sectarian position.—133, 134

*Parabellum*—see *Radek, K. B.*

*Parvus (Gelfand, Alexander Lvovich)* (1869-1924)—adhered to the Left wing of the German Social-Democratic Party in 1890s and 1900s; took the Menshevik stand after the Second RSDLP Congress (1903); was in Russia during the First Russian revolution (1905-07); departed from the Social-Democracy in the period of reaction (1907-10); social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18).—147, 159

*Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich* (1856-1918)—prominent in the Russian and international working-class movement, first propagandist of Marxism in Russia. In 1883, founded the first Russian Marxist organisation, the Emancipation of Labour group in Geneva; joined the Mensheviks after the Second RSDLP Congress; opposed the liquidators in 1907-12; leader of the pro-Party Mensheviks; social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18).—99, 125, 129, 131, 139, 141, 147, 148, 161, 174, 176, 185, 232

*Potresov, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1869-1934)—a Menshevik leader; an ideologist of liquidationism during the period of reaction (1907-10) and the new revolutionary upsurge; an editor-in-chief of the magazines *Vozrozhdenie*, *Nasha Zarya* and other organs of Menshevik liquidators; social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18).—177

*Proudhon, Pierre Joseph* (1809-1865)—French author, economist and sociologist, ideologist of petty bourgeoisie; a founder of anarchism. He dreamed to perpetuate petty private property and criticised large-scale capitalist property from the petty-bourgeois positions.—100, 145, 156

*Purishkevich, Vladimir Mitrofanovich* (1870-1920)—big landowner, rabid Black Hundred reactionary, monarchist; initiated the foundation of Union of the Russian People, the Black Hundred organisation; left the Union in 1907 and founded another monarchist counter-revolutionary organisation. Deputy to the Second, Third and Fourth State Dumas; became famous for his rabble-rousing, anti-Semitic speeches. After the October Socialist Revolution ac-

tively fought against Soviet power.—67, 88, 92, 95, 98, 104, 127, 128, 141

*Pyatakov, Grigory Leonidovich* (*Pyatakov, Y., Yuri, Kievsky, P., Kii*) (1890-1937)—Bolshevik from 1910; was on Party work in the Ukraine and abroad; during the First World War (1914-18) held an anti-Leninist view of the question of the right of nations to self-determination and some other key questions of Party policy; founded anti-Party group together with Bukharin and Bosh.—180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 233, 238, 243

## Q

*Quelch, Thomas* (1886-1954)—British socialist, later a Communist, trade-union leader and publicist; during the First World War (1914-18) took internationalist stand; was delegate to the Second Congress of the Comintern; in 1920 joined the Communist Party of Great Britain.—288

## R

*Radek, Karl Berngardovich* (*Parabellum*) (1885-1939)—participant in the Social-Democratic movement in Galicia, Poland and Germany from the 1900s; contributed to the press of German Left Social-Democracy; internationalist during the First World War (1914-18), though expressed some Gentrist views; held an incorrect view of the question of the right of nations to self-determination.—143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 232, 234, 238, 239, 244

*Radishchev, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1749-1802)—outstanding Russian writer, revolutionary enlightener, author of famous *Journey from Petersburg to Moscow*, which exposed the autocratic-serfdom rule. By order of Catherine II he was arrested, imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress. The court sentenced him to death, but later the sentence was commuted for ten years' exile in Siberia. Literary work and public activity of Radishchev influenced greatly the development of the revolutionary movement in Russia.—126

*Renaudel, Pierre* (1871-1935)—a Reformist leader of the French Socialist Party; editor of *L'Humanité* in 1914-20; member of the Chamber of Deputies in 1914-19 and in 1924; social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18).—159

*Rennenkampf, Pavel Karlovich* (1854-1918)—tsarist general, a butcher of the revolutionary movement, was extremely cruel suppressing Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900-01. Together with general Mel-ler-Zakomelsky was a commander of the punitive expedition in the area of Trans-Siberian Railway in 1906.—61

*Renner, Karl* (1870-1950)—Austrian politician, leader and theoretician of Austrian Right Social-Democracy, an ideologist of the so-

- called Austro-Marxism; social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18); Chancellor of Austria in 1919-20, President of Austria in 1945-50.—75, 153
- Rodichev, Fyodor Izmailovich* (1853-1932)—landowner and Zemstvo (district council) member, a leader of Cadet Party, and a member of its Central Committee. Deputy to the First, Second, Third and Fourth State Duma. After the 1917 February bourgeois-democratic revolution was the Provisional Government's Commissar for Finnish Affairs. After the October Socialist Revolution, a white-guard émigré.—126
- Roy, Manabendra Nath* (1892-1948)—Indian politician. In 1910-15 participated in the Indian revolutionary movement against British colonizers, an émigré in 1915; later, sided with communists; up to 1920 lived in Mexico; delegate to the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth congresses of the Communist International; from 1922 a candidate to the Indian Radical-Democratic Party; its leader from 1924.—284, 285, 287
- Rubanovich, Ilya Adolfovich* (1860-1920)—a leader of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, its representative on the international socialist congresses in Amsterdam (1904) and Stuttgart (1907); member of the International Socialist Bureau; social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18); after the October Socialist Revolution fought against Soviet power.—125, 131, 161
- Ruge, Arnold* (1802-1880)—German journalist, Young Hegelian, radical. In 1844 published in Paris together with K. Marx the journal *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*; deputy to the Frankfurt National Assembly in 1848, exponent of its Left wing. After 1866, National-Liberal, supporter of O. von Bismarck.—35
- Rühle, Otto* (b. 1874)—German Left Social-Democrat; journalist and teacher; deputy to Reichstag from 1912; internationalist during the First World War (1914-18).—166

## S

- Scheidemann, Philipp* (1865-1939)—a leader of the extreme Right, opportunist wing of the German Social-Democracy; from February to June 1919, headed the coalition government of the Weimar Republic and was an organiser of brutal suppression of the working-class movement in 1918-21; subsequently gave up political activity.—147
- Sembat, Marcel* (1862-1922)—a Reformist leader of the French Socialist Party, journalist, actively contributed to the French socialist press. Social-chauvinist during the First World War (1914-18). Minister of Public Works in the imperialist French Government of National Defence from August 1914 up to September 1917. In February, 1915 participated in the work of the London conference of socialists of the Entente member-states, its aim was to unite them on the base of social-chauvinism.—176
- Semkovsky, Semyon (Bronstein, S. Y.)* (b. 1882)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik, an editor of Trotsky's newspaper *Pravda*, pub-

- lished in Vienna, contributed to the press of Mensheviks-liquidators and Social-Democracy of some countries. V. I. Lenin sharply criticized Semkovsky's views on national and some other questions. Centrist during the First World War (1914-18).—106, 108, 117, 147, 159
- Shahumyan, Stepan Georgievich* (1878-1918)—prominent figure in the Communist Party and the Soviet State; member of the RSDLP from 1900. A Party leader in Trans-Caucasia and an organiser and editor of the Bolshevik legal and illegal press (1904-10). In Astrakhan exile (1911-14) wrote on Lenin's instructions an article *On Cultural National Autonomy*, where upheld principles of proletarian-internationalism. After his return from exile in 1914, headed the Bolshevik organisation of Baku.—82-85
- Sismondi, Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de* (1773-1842)—Swiss economist and historian; at first adhered to the bourgeois classical political economy, later, to petty-bourgeois socialism; father of economic romanticism, expressed the interests of small producers.—50
- Skobelev, Matvei Ivanovich* (1885-1939)—took an active part in the Social-Democratic movement from 1903, Menshevik, engineer. From 1906 to 1912 lived abroad, contributed to the Menshevik press; deputy to the Fourth State Duma from Russian curia of Trans-Caucasia; centrist during the First World War (1914-18).—177
- Skop., N.*—see *Zinoviev, G. Y.*
- Smirnov, Y.*—see *Gurevich, E. L.*
- Sokolovsky (Basok)*—see *Melenevsky, M. I.*
- Spectator*—see *Nakhimson, M. I.*
- Ströbel, Heinrich* (1869-1945)—German Social-Democrat, Centrist. In 1905-16, member of the editorial board of *Vorwärts*, central organ of the German Social-Democracy; deputy to Prussian Landtag (1908-18). During the First World War (1914-18) opposed social-chauvinism and the imperialist war, adhered to the Left wing of the *Internationale* group, where headed supporters of Kautsky, completely adopted Kautskyism in 1916.—164, 166
- Struve, Pyotr Berngardovich* (1870-1944)—economist and journalist; in the 1890s prominent "legal Marxist", later, a leader of Gadet Party.—78, 92, 99, 105

## T

- Thalheimer, August* (1884-1948)—German Social-Democrat, journalist; internationalist during the First World War (1914-18); editor of the Social-Democratic newspaper *Volksfreund* in 1914-16; member of the *Internationale* group.—164
- Thiers, Adolphe* (1797-1877)—French politician and historian, organiser of merciless suppression of the Paris Commune.—59, 61
- Tilak, Bal Gangadhar* (1856-1920)—prominent in the Indian national-liberation movement; leader of the Left wing of the Indian National Congress. During a period of revolutionary upsurge (1905-08) publicised the revolutionary experience of Russian proletarians and

called the Indians to use it in their struggle.

In 1908 was sentenced to 6 years of hard labour for his propaganda against British colonisers. The sentence provoked a protest by workers in Bombay, who staged a general political strike. In 1914 he was discharged.

Tilak welcomed the October Socialist Revolution and under its influence he began focusing attention on the necessity of the nationalisation of railways and enterprises which were the property of British colonisers.—53

*Tugan-Baranovsky, Mikhail Ivanovich* (1865-1919)—Russian economist, prominent "legal Marxist", Cadet Party member during the revolution of 1905-07.—105

*Tyszkiewicz, Jan (Jogiches, Leon)* (1867-1919)—prominent in the Polish and German labour movement; a founder of the Social-Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, member of the Party Executive. During the First World War (1914-18) active in the German Social-Democratic movement, a founder of the Spartacus group; was in prison during 1916-18. After the 1918 November revolution was discharged and took part in the foundation of the Communist Party of Germany, later, was its CC Secretary. Was arrested in March 1919 and then assassinated in the Berlin prison.—238

## U

*Usievich, Grigory Alexandrovich* (1890-1918)—member of the RSDLP, Bolshevik from 1907. In 1914, escaped convict, émigré. Lived in Switzerland from 1916; active in the October Socialist Revolution. Worked to organise industrial production in Western Siberia in 1918; was killed by White Czechs.—240

## V

*Vandervelde, Emile* (1866-1938)—leader of the Belgian Workers' Party, chairman of the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International, extreme opportunist; during the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist and a member of the bourgeois government.—159

*Van Kol, Heinrich* (1852-1925)—a founder and leader of the Dutch Social-Democratic Workers' Party (1894). Several years after the Party was formed, took reformist and opportunist stand. At the Amsterdam (1904) and Stuttgart (1907) congresses of the Second International defended the opportunist resolution on the colonial question, seeking to justify the enslavement of the colonies by representing it as a civilising mission on the part of the imperialist states. Was hostile towards the October Revolution and the Soviet state.—48

*Virvaire*—French general, commanded the troops summoned to suppress the strikers in Villeneuve-St-Georges on July 30, 1908.—55

*V.O.*—author of the article "Worsening of Education at School", published in *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 35, March 21, 1914.—124

## W

*Wilhelm II (Hohenzollern)* (1859-1941)—King of Prussia and Emperor of Germany (1888-1918).—163, 258

*Wróblewski, Walery* (1836-1908)—prominent Polish revolutionary democrat; general of the Paris Commune (1871); after its defeat emigrated to London; was co-opted to the General Council of the First International; was active in the struggle against the Bakuninists, supporting the tactical line of Marx and Engels. To the end of his days Wróblewski remained faithful to the ideas of socialism and international solidarity.—36

## Y

*Yüan Shih-K'ai* (1859-1916)—Chinese politician, adhered to Liberals in 1898 but later betrayed them. After the overthrow of Manchu dynasty used the support of the internal reaction and foreign imperialists to become the President of China, established military dictatorship. In 1915 tried to proclaim himself Emperor, but failed.—

*Y.B.*—see *Bosh, Y. B.*

*Yudenich, Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1862-1933)—tsarist general; headed the punitive expedition to Armenia in 1905-06. After the October Socialist Revolution, member of the counter-revolutionary North-Western Government, commander-in-chief of the Whiteguard North-Western army; in 1919 twice tried to seize Petrograd, but without success. Defeated by the Red Army in November 1919, retreated to Estonia and later went to Great Britain.—265

*Yuri*—see *Pyatakov, G. L.*

*Yurkevich (Rybalka), Lev* (1885-1918)—Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist, opportunist; actively contributed to the nationalistic magazine of the Mensheviks *Dzvin* (The Bell) in 1913-14.—86, 95, 96-97, 98, 105, 117, 159

## Z

*Zetkin, Clara* (1857-1933)—prominent in the German and international labour and communist movement, gifted author, ardent orator, champion of revolution. Together with Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring and Karl Liebknecht, took an active part in the struggle against Bernstein and other opportunists. Revolutionary internationalist during the First World War (1914-18), opposed social-chauvinism; member of the International group from 1916; a founder of the Communist Party of Germany. At the Third Con-

gress of the Communist International was elected a member of the Comintern Executive Committee, headed its international women's secretariat. From 1924 was permanent Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Red Aid.—164

*Zinoviev, Grigory Yevseyevich (Radomyslsky, Grigory, Skop., N.)* (1883-1936)—joined the RSDLP in 1901; from 1908 to April 1917 a political emigrant; member of the editorial board of the Party's Central Organ *Sotsial-Demokrat* and of the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary*. During the years of reaction 1907-10 maintained a conciliatory stand with regard to the liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyists.—105, 182, 235, 238

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